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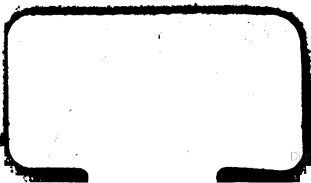
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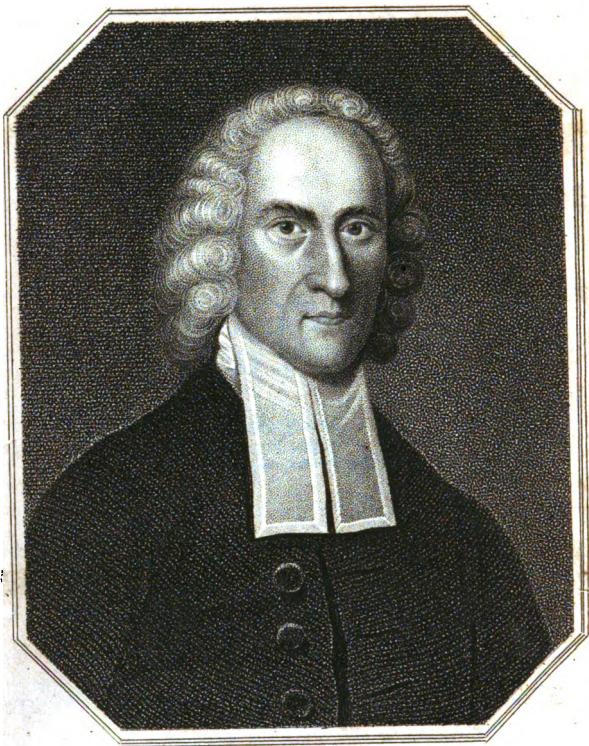


AN
(Edwards, J.)

1. Name (Edwards, Jonathan ,)
2. " (" , Sarah —)
3. " (Burr, Esther —)
4. " (Edwards, Jonathan , —)

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The Rev. Jonⁿ Edwards, A.M.

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Memoirs

OF THE

REV. JONATHAN EDWARDS, A. M.

President of the College in New Jersey.

COMPILED ORIGINALLY

BY SAMUEL HOPKINS, D. D.

**REVISED AND ENLARGED BY THE EDITORS OF
EDWARDS'S WORKS,**

**And now first published in a separate Volume, with
numerous verbal Emendations:**

BY JOHN HAWKSLEY.

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PREFACE.

IN the esteem of all the judicious who were well acquainted with him, PRESIDENT EDWARDS* was one of the *greatest, best, and most useful* men of this age. By his conversation, preaching, and writings, he discovered a remarkable strength of mind, clearness of thought, and depth of penetration.

No one, perhaps, in our day, has been more universally esteemed as an eminently

* There was another valuable writer of the name of Jonathan Edwards, Principal of Jesus College, Cambridge, who published an excellent book, entitled, "A Preservative against Socinianism," in four Parts, 4to.; the first of which was printed in 1693, and the last in 1703.—By way of distinction, therefore, as well as of deserved respect, the subject of these Memoirs is called "President Edwards."—W.

good man. His love to God and the excellent of the earth, and his benevolence to man; his zeal for God and his cause; his uprightness, humility, self-denial, and weanedness from the world; his close walk with God; his conscientious, constant, and universal obedience, in all holy ways of living—have been as conspicuous as the uncommon strength of his understanding.

And that this distinguished light has not shone in vain, we have the most ample testimony. God, the giver of his talents, led him into a way of improving them, both by preaching and writing, which has proved the means of converting many from the error of their ways, and of greatly promoting the interest of real christianity, both in America and in Europe. And there is reason to hope, that though dead, he will yet speak for ages to come, to the great advantage of the church of Christ,

and the immortal welfare of many souls—and that his publications will produce a yet greater harvest of happiness to man and glory to God in the day of the Lord.

The design of the following *Memoirs* is not merely to publish these things, in order to tell the world how eminently great, wise, holy, and useful a person President Edwards was; but rather to give the needful information as to what way, and by the use of what means, he attained to such an uncommon degree of knowledge, holiness, and usefulness, that others may thereby be directed and excited to attempt the same.

The reader, therefore, is not to expect a mere encomium on the dead, but a plain and faithful narrative of leading facts; together with some internal exercises, expressed in Mr. Edwards's own words. Let no one regard the following composition so

much an act of friendship for the dead, as of kindness to the living; it being only an attempt to render a life that has been greatly useful, yet more so. And let the reader keep in memory, that if he is not made wiser and better, gains no skill or disposition to live a holy and useful life, he fails entirely in what was principally designed by these Memoirs.

In this world, so full of darkness and delusion, it is of great importance that all should be able to distinguish between true religion and that which is false. Towards this, no one perhaps has taken more pains, or laboured more successfully, than he whose life is set before the reader. And it is presumed that his religious exercises, resolutions, and conduct, here exhibited, will serve well to illustrate, and in no common degree to exemplify his important writings on that subject. Here pure and

undefiled religion, in distinction from all counterfeits, exhibits a picture well calculated to instruct and console those who, in their religious sentiments and exercises, are built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, and of which Jesus Christ is the chief corner stone. Their hearts and practices will, in some degree, answer to it, as in a mirror face answers to face. And here, they who have hitherto, unhappily, been in darkness and delusion, as to this infinitely important affair, may be instructed and convinced.

This is a point concerning which, above most others, the Protestant world appears to be much in the dark. Mr. Edwards was wont, frequently, to observe this in conversation, and the longer he lived, the more was he convinced of it. If therefore the following account is adapted to answer this purpose, and may be considered as a seasonable word,

saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it," it will not only be a relief under so great a calamity to the christian world, the early removal of so bright a luminary, but also prove a great blessing to many, and promote an end highly important; an end worthy the attention and pursuit of all, and which engaged the warm and steady zeal of the subject of these *Memoirs* to the last.

In this view, especially, is the following life offered to the public, with an earnest desire that every reader may faithfully improve it for the purpose of advancing *undefiled* religion in himself and others, while he candidly overlooks any defects which he may observe to be chargeable on the compiler.

August 20, 1764.

* * The notes signed W. and the Appendix No. III. were added by the Rev. Dr. Williams and the Rev. E. Parsons, the editors of President Edwards's Works.

MEMOIRS

OF THE

REV. JONATHAN EDWARDS, A.M.

CHAP. I.

Mr. Edwards's Birth and Parentage, Education and Entrance on the Ministry.

PRESIDENT EDWARDS was one of those men of whom it is not easy to speak with justice, without seeming, at least, to border on the marvellous, and to incur the guilt of adulation. The christian biographer labours under a difficulty, in describing the characters of extraordinary men, which the writers of other lives are but too generally allowed to forget; for he is bound so to represent actions and motives, as to remind his readers, that the uncommon excellencies of a character flow entirely from the bounty of heaven, for the wisest and best purposes, and are not the result of natural vigour and acumen. Otherwise, instead of placing

these excellencies in a view advantageous for imitation, or describing a character attainable, as to its most valuable traits, only by gracious aids, there would be danger of setting up an idol; more precious indeed than gold, but still an idol, whereby the mind would be led astray from the one great object of the christian life, Jesus Christ, whose fulness *filleteth all in all*. While we have a just view of *him*, it is a privilege to hear of his wonderful works in and by his honoured servants; and to be enabled to imitate them is a great augmentation of the privilege. If *their* graces, exemplified in a variety of circumstances, in a manner force us to a throne of grace, and thereby prove the means of quickening *ours*; then do we make a right use of their history, and follow them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

Jonathan Edwards was born on the 5th of October, 1703, at Windsor, in the Province of Connecticut, North America. His father, the Rev. Timothy Edwards, was minister of that place almost sixty years, and resided there from Nov. 1694, till

January, 1758, when he died, in the eighty-ninth year of his age; not two months before this his only son Jonathan. He was universally beloved, and esteemed as an upright, pious, exemplary man; a faithful and very useful minister of the gospel. A few more particulars of this excellent man will be acceptable. He was born at Hartford, in Connecticut, May 14th, 1669; and received the honours of the college at Cambridge, in New England, by having the degrees of Bachelor and Master of Arts given him the same day, July 4th, 1694, one in the forenoon, and the other in the afternoon. On November 6th, 1694, he married Esther, daughter of the Rev. and celebrated Solomon Stoddard, of Northampton, in the twenty-third year of her age. They lived together in the married state above sixty-three years. Mrs. Edwards, the President's mother, was born June 2d, 1672, and lived to about ninety years of age, (dying some years after her son,) a remarkable instance of the small decay or mental powers. This venerable couple had eleven children; one son, the subject of these

Memoirs, and ten daughters, four of whom were older, and six younger than himself.*

* We shall here subjoin a sketch of Mr. Edwards's more remote ancestors, as it may gratify some readers. Jonathan Edwards's grandfather was Richard Edwards, who married Elizabeth Tuttle, daughter of William Tuttle, of New Haven, in Connecticut, and Elizabeth his wife, who came from Northamptonshire, in Old England. By this connection he had seven children, of whom the eldest was Timothy, the President's father. His second marriage was to Mrs. Talcot, sister to Governor Talcot, by whom he had six children.—The father of Richard, was William Edwards, Jonathan's great-grandfather, who came from England young and unmarried. The person he married, whose christian name was Agnes, and who had left England for America, had two brothers in England, one of them mayor of Exeter, and the other of Barnstaple.—The father of William, Richard Edwards, the President's great-great-grandfather, was minister of the gospel in London, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth; and his wife, Ann Edwards, was employed in making some part of the royal attire. After the death of Mr. Edwards, she married Mr. James Cole, who with her son William accompanied her to America, and all died at Hartford, in Connecticut.

President Edwards's grandfather, on the mother's side, the Rev. Solomon Stoddard, of Northampton, New England, married Mrs. Mather, the relict of the Rev. Mr. Mather, his predecessor, who was the first minister at Northampton. Her maiden name was Esther Warham, daughter and youngest child of the Rev. John Warham, minister at Windsor, in Connecticut, and who, before he left England, had been minister at Exeter. This lady had three children by Mr. Mather; Eunice, Warham, and

Mr. Edwards entered Yale College when about twelve years of age; and received

Eliakim; and twelve children by Mr. Stoddard, six sons and six daughters. Three of the sons died in infancy, and three lived to adult years, viz. Anthony, John, and Israel; the last of whom died a prisoner in France. Anthony was minister of the gospel at Woodbury, in Connecticut; he was in the ministry about sixty years, and died Sept. 6, 1760, in the eighty-second year of his age. John lived at Northampton, and often, especially in his younger years, served the town as their representative, at the great and general court at Boston; and was, long, head of the county of Hampshire; as chief colonel, and chief judge of the court of common pleas. He likewise served in the province of Massachusetts Bay, as one of his Majesty's council. He distinguished himself as an able politician, a wise counsellor, an upright and skilful judge; possessed in an eminent degree the spirit of government, and ever proved a great and steady friend to the interest of religion. He was a warm friend and admirer of our Mr. Edwards, and, to the time of his death, greatly strengthened his hands in the work of the ministry. A more particular account of the life and character of this truly great man, may be seen in the sermon which Mr. Edwards preached and published, on the occasion of his death.—The father of Mr. Solomon Stoddard, and Mr. Edwards's great-grandfather, on the mother's side, was Anthony Stoddard, esq. of Boston, a zealous congregational man. He had five wives, the first of whom was Mary Downing, sister to Sir George Downing, whose other sister married Governor Bradstreet. Solomon was the first child of this first marriage.—From these particulars it appears, that Mr. Edwards's ancestors were from the west of England, who, upon their emigration, allied themselves to some of the most respectable families in America.

the degree of Bachelor of Arts in Sept. 1720, a little before he was seventeen. While at college, his character was marked with sobriety and improvement in learning. In the second year of his abode there, he read Locke on the Human Understanding with much delight. His uncommon genius, by which he was naturally formed for close thought and deep penetration, now began to discover and exert itself. From his own account, he was inexpressibly entertained and pleased with that book, when he read it at college; more so than the most avaricious miser, when accumulating stores of silver and gold from some newly-discovered treasure. Though he made good proficiency in all the arts and sciences, and had an uncommon taste for natural philosophy, (which he cultivated to the end of his life,) yet moral philosophy, including divinity, was his favourite subject, in which he soon made great progress.

He lived at college nearly two years after he took his first degree, preparing for the work of the ministry; after which, having passed the usual trials, he was licensed to

preach the gospel as a candidate. In consequence of an application from a number of ministers in New England, who were intrusted to act in behalf of the English Presbyterians in New York, he went to that city at the beginning of August, 1722, and preached there with great acceptance about eight months. But on account of the smallness of the society, and some special difficulties that attended it, he did not think there was a rational prospect of answering the good end proposed, by his settling there as their minister. He therefore left them the next spring, and retired to his father's house, where he spent the summer in close study. He was earnestly solicited by the people to return again to New York; but his former views were not altered, and therefore, however disposed to gratify them, he could not comply with their wishes.

In Sept. 1723, he received his degree of Master of Arts. About this time several congregations invited him to become their minister; but being chosen tutor of Yale College, he decided to continue in that

retirement, where he attended the business of tuition above two years. During his stay there, he was applied to by the people at Northampton, who had some powerful motives to offer, in favour of his exercising his ministry among them; and especially that his grandfather Stoddard, by reason of his great age, stood in need of assistance. He therefore resigned his tutorship in Sept. 1726, and accepted their invitation, and was ordained as colleague with his grandfather, Feb. 15, 1727, in the twenty-fourth year of his age, and continued at Northampton twenty-three years and four months.

CHAP. II.

Extracts from his Private Writings.

BETWEEN the time of his going to New York and his settlement at Northampton, Mr. Edwards formed a number of Resolutions, which are still preserved. The particular time, and special occasion of making many of these Resolutions, he has noted in

a Diary which he then kept; where we also find many other observations and rules relative to his own exercises and conduct. As these private writings may be justly considered the basis of his conduct, or the plan according to which his whole life was governed, it may be proper here to give the reader some idea of them by the following extracts.

SECT. I.

His Resolutions.

Mr. Edwards was too well acquainted with human weakness and frailty, where the intention is most sincere, to enter on any resolutions rashly. He therefore looked to God for aid, who alone can afford success in the use of any means. This he placed at the head of all his other important rules,—that his dependence was on grace,—while he frequently recurred to a serious perusal of them.—“Being sensible that I am unable to do any thing without God’s help, I do humbly intreat him by his grace to enable me to keep these resolutions, so

far as they are agreeable to his will, for Christ's sake." He then adds :

" REMEMBER TO READ OVER THESE RESOLUTIONS ONCE A WEEK."*

1. Resolved, 'that *I will do whatsoever* I think to be most to God's glory and my own good, profit, and pleasure, on THE WHOLE; without any consideration of the time, whether now, or never so many myriads of ages hence;—to do whatever I think to be my *duty*, and most for the good and advantage of mankind in general,—

* The Resolutions, as contained in the original manuscript, were seventy in number; a part only are here transcribed, as a specimen of the whole. The figures affixed to them are those by which they were numbered in that manuscript; and they are here retained for the sake of the references made to some of them in the Diary, as the reader will find in the subsequent part of these Memoirs. It may be proper to add, that we should regard the *spirit* of these Resolutions, and the following extracts from the Diary, without a minute attention to the critical nicety of his language. In fact, as these extracts were penned in a very early period of life, his style was not formed; and his chief concern was to deal plainly with himself, in the presence of God, and to record for his own private inspection what he thought might be of most use to him in future.—W.

whatever *difficulties* I meet with, how many and how great soever.

2. Resolved, to be continually endeavouring to find some *new contrivance* to promote the fore-mentioned things.

4. Resolved, *never to DO, BE, or SUFFER* any thing, in soul or body, less or more, but what tends to the glory of God.

5. Resolved, never to lose one moment of *time*; but improve it in the most profitable way I possibly can.

6. Resolved, to live with all my might, while I do live.*

7. Resolved, never to do any thing, which I should be afraid to do if it were the last hour of my life.

9. Resolved, to think much, on all occasions, of my own dying, and of the common circumstances, which attend death.

* This is the full and exact import of the Latin motto, "*Dum vivimus, vivamus*;" which was the motto of Dr. Doddridge's family arms, and which he paraphrased with so much beauty.

"Live, while you live, the *epicure* would say,

"And seize the pleasures of the present day.

"Live, while you live, the sacred *preacher* cries,

"And give to God each moment as it flies.

"Lord, in my views let both united be;

"I live in *pleasure*, when I live to *thee*."—W.

11. Resolved, when I think of any theorem in divinity to be solved, immediately to do what I can towards solving it, if circumstances do not hinder.

13. Resolved, to be endeavouring to find out fit objects of charity and liberality.

14. Resolved, never to do any thing out of revenge.

15. Resolved, never to suffer the least motions of anger to irrational beings.

17. Resolved, that I will live so as I shall wish I had done when I come to die.

18. Resolved, to live so at all times, as I think is best in my devout frames, and when I have clearest notions of the gospel and another world.

20. Resolved, to maintain the strictest temperance in eating and drinking.

21. Resolved, never to do any thing, which if I should see in another, I should count a just occasion to despise him for, or to think any way the more meanly of him.

24. Resolved, whenever I do any evil action, to trace it back, till I come to the original cause; and then both carefully endeavour to do so no more, and to fight

and pray with all my might against the original of it.

28. Resolved, to study the scriptures so steadily, constantly, and frequently, as that I may find, and plainly perceive myself to grow in the knowledge of the same.

30. Resolved, to strive to my utmost every week to be brought higher in religion, and to a higher exercise of grace, than I was the week before.

32. Resolved, to be strictly and firmly faithful to my trust, that Prov. xx. 6. (*A faithful man who can find?*) may not be partly fulfilled in me.

33. Resolved, always to do what I can towards making, maintaining, and establishing peace, when it can be done without an over-balancing detriment in other respects.

34. Resolved, in narrations never to speak any thing but the pure and simple verity.

36. Resolved, never to speak evil of any person, except some particular good call for it.

37. Resolved, to enquire every night, as I am going to bed, wherein I have been negligent, what sin I have committed, and

wherein I have denied myself; also at the end of every week, month, and year.

38. Resolved, never to speak any thing that is ridiculous, or matter of laughter on the Lord's day.

39. Resolved, never to do any thing that I so much question the lawfulness of, as that I intend, at the same time, to consider and examine afterwards, whether it be lawful or no: except I as much question the lawfulness of the omission.

41. Resolved, to ask myself at the end of every day, week, month, and year, wherein I could possibly in any respect have done better.

42. Resolved, frequently to renew the dedication of myself to God, which was made at my baptism; which I solemnly renewed when I was received into the communion of the church; and which I have solemnly ratified this twelfth day of January, 1723.

43. Resolved, never to act as if I were any way my own, but entirely and altogether God's.

46. Resolved, never to allow the least

measure of any fretting uneasiness at my father or mother. Resolved, to suffer no effects of it, so much as in the least alteration of speech, or motion of my eye: and to be especially careful of it, with respect to any of our family.

47. Resolved, to endeavour to my utmost to deny whatever is not most agreeable to a good, and universally sweet and benevolent, quiet, peaceable, contented, easy, compassionate, generous, humble, meek, modest, submissive, obliging diligent and industrious, charitable, even, patient, moderate, forgiving, sincere temper; and to do at all times what such a temper would lead me to. Examine strictly every week, whether I have done so.

48. Resolved, constantly, with the utmost niceness and diligence, and the strictest scrutiny, to be looking into the state of my soul, that I may know whether I have truly an interest in Christ or no; that when I come to die, I may not have any negligence respecting this to repent of.

50. Resolved, I will act so as I think I shall judge would have been best, and

most prudent, when I come into the future world.

52. I frequently hear persons in old age say how they would live, if they were to live their lives over again: Resolved, that I will live just so as I can think I shall wish I had done, supposing I live to old age.

54. Whenever I hear any thing spoken in conversation of any person, if I think it would be praiseworthy in me, Resolved, to endeavour to imitate it.

55. Resolved, to endeavour to my utmost to act as I can think I should do, if I had already seen the happiness of heaven, and hell torments.

56. Resolved, never to give over, nor in the least to slacken my fight with my corruptions, however unsuccessful I may be.

57. Resolved, when I fear misfortunes and adversities, to examine whether I have done my duty, and resolve to do it; and let it be just as Providence orders it, I will, as far as I can, be concerned about nothing but my duty and my sin.

62. Resolved, never to do any thing but

duty ; and then, according to Eph. vi. 6—8, do it willingly and cheerfully as unto the Lord, and not to man ; knowing that whatever good thing any man doth, the same shall he receive of the Lord.

65. Resolved, to exercise myself much in this all my life long, viz. with the greatest openness to declare my ways to God, and lay open my soul to him : all my sins, temptations, difficulties, sorrows, fears, hopes, desires, and every thing, and every circumstance ; according to Dr. Manton's 27th sermon on the 119th Psalm.

67. Resolved, after afflictions, to inquire, What I am the better for them ; what good I *have* got, and what I *might* have got by them."

SECT. II.

Extracts from his Diary.

Though Mr. Edwards wrote his Diary for his own private use, exclusively, it is not apprehended that the following extracts are unfairly exposed to public view. That which is calculated to do good, and is per-

fectly consistent with an author's real reputation, may be published with honour, whatever his design might be while writing. Besides, what Mr. Edwards wished to have effectually concealed from every eye but his own, he wrote in a particular short hand. After having written pretty much in that character, he adds this remark in long hand; "Remember to act according to Prov. xii. 23. *A prudent man concealeth knowledge.*"

Saturday, Dec. 22, 1722.—This day, revived by God's Holy Spirit. Affected with the sense of the excellency of holiness. Felt more exercise of love to Christ than usual. Have also felt sensible repentance for sin, because it was committed against so merciful and good a God. This night, made the 37th Resolution.

Sabbath night, Dec. 23.—Made the 38th Resolution.

Monday, Dec. 24.—Higher thoughts than usual of the excellency of Jesus Christ and his kingdom.

Wednesday, Jan. 2, 1723.—Dull. I find by experience, that let me make resolu-

tions, and do what I will, with never so many inventions, it is all nothing, and to no purpose at all, without the motions of the Spirit of God: for if the Spirit of God should be as much withdrawn from me always, as for the week past, notwithstanding all I do, I should not grow; but should languish, and miserably fade away. There is no dependence upon myself. It is to no purpose to resolve, except we depend on the grace of God; for if it were not for his mere grace, one might be a very good man one day, and a very wicked one the next.

Sabbath, Jan. 6, at night.—Much concerned about the improvement of precious time. Intend to live in continual mortification, without ceasing, as long as in this world.

Tuesday, Jan. 8, in the morning.—Higher thoughts than usual of the excellency of Christ, and felt an unusual repentance for sin therefrom.

Wednesday, Jan. 9, at night.—Decayed. I am sometimes apt to think, I have a great deal more of holiness than I really have. I

find, now and then, that abominable corruption which is directly contrary to what I read respecting eminent christians. How deceitful is my heart! I take up a strong resolution, but how soon does it weaken!

Thursday, Jan. 10, about noon.—Reviving. 'Tis a great dishonour to Christ, in whom I hope I have an interest, to be uneasy at my worldly state and condition:—When I see the prosperity of others, and that all things go easy with them; when the world is smooth to them, and they are happy in many respects, and very prosperous, or are advanced to much honour, &c. to envy them, or be the least uneasy at it; or even to wish for the same prosperity, and that it would ever be so with me. Wherefore concluded, always to rejoice in every one's prosperity, and to expect for myself no happiness of that nature as long as I live; but reckon upon afflictions, and betake myself entirely to another happiness.

I think I find myself much more sprightly and healthy, both in body and mind, for my self-denial in eating, drinking, and sleeping. I think it would be advantageous

every morning to consider my business and temptations; and what sins I shall be exposed to that day: and to make a resolution how to improve the day, and to avoid those sins. And so at the beginning of every week, month, and year.—I never knew before what was meant by not setting our hearts upon these things. It is not to care about them, depend upon them, afflict ourselves much with fears of losing them, or please ourselves with expectation of obtaining them, or hope of their continuance. At night made the 41st Resolution.

Saturday, Jan. 12, in the morning.—I have this day solemnly renewed my baptismal covenant and self-dedication, which I renewed when I was received into the communion of the church. I have been before God; and have given myself, all that I am and have to God, so that I am not in any respect my own: I can claim no right in myself, no right in this understanding, this will, these affections that are in me; neither have I any right to this body, or any of its members: no right to this tongue, these hands, nor feet: no

right to these senses, these eyes, these ears, this smell or taste. I have given myself clear away, and have not retained any thing as my own. I have been to God this morning, and told him that I gave myself *wholly* to him. I have given every power to him; so that for the future, I will challenge or claim no right in myself, in any respect. I have expressly promised him, and do now promise Almighty God, that by his grace I will not. I have this morning told him, that I did take him for my whole portion and felicity, looking on nothing else as any part of my happiness, nor acting as if it were; and his law for the constant rule of my obedience: and would fight with all my might against the world, the flesh, and the devil, to the end of my life. And did believe in Jesus Christ, and receive him as a prince and a saviour; and would adhere to the faith and obedience of the gospel, how hazardous and difficult soever the profession and practice of it may be. That I did receive the blessed Spirit as my teacher, sanctifier, and only comforter; and cherish all his

motions to enlighten, purify, confirm, comfort, and assist me. This I have done. And I pray God, for the sake of Christ, to look upon it as a self-dedication; and to receive me now as entirely his own, and deal with me in all respects as such; whether he afflicts me or prospers me, or whatever he pleases to do with me, who am his. Now, henceforth I am not to act in any respect as my own. I shall act as my own, if I ever make use of any of my powers to any thing that is not to the glory of God, or do not make the glorifying of him my whole and entire business; if I murmur in the least at afflictions; if I grieve at the prosperity of others; if I am any way uncharitable; if I am angry because of injuries; if I revenge my own cause; if I do any thing purely to please myself, or avoid any thing for the sake of my ease, or omit any thing because it is great self-denial; if I trust to myself; if I take any of the praise of any good that I do, or rather God does by me; or if I am any way proud. This day made the 42d and 43d Resolutions.

Monday, Jan. 14. -- The dedication I made of myself to my God, on Saturday last, has been exceeding useful to me. I thought I had a more spiritual insight into the scripture while reading the 8th chapter to the Romans, than ever in my life before. —Great instances of mortification are deep wounds given to the body of sin, hard blows that make him stagger and reel; we thereby get firm ground and footing against him.—While we live without great instances of mortification and self-denial, the old man keeps whereabouts he was; for he is sturdy and obstinate, and will not stir for small blows. After the greatest mortifications, I always find the greatest comfort. Supposing there was never but one complete christian, in all respects, of a right stamp, having christianity shining in its true lustre, at a time in the world; resolved, to act just as I would do, if I strove with all my might to be that one, that should be in my time.

Tuesday, Jan. 15.—It seemed yesterday, the day before, and Saturday, that I should always retain the same resolutions to the

same height, but alas, how soon do I decay! O, how weak, how infirm, how unable to do any thing am I! What a poor, inconsistent, miserable wretch, without the assistance of God's Spirit! While I stand, I am ready to think I stand in my own strength; and am ready to triumph over my enemies, as if it were I myself that caused them to flee; when, alas! I am but a poor infant, upheld by Jesus Christ; who holds me up, and gives me liberty to smile to see my enemies flee, when he drives them before me; and so I laugh, as though I myself did it, when it is only Jesus Christ leads me along, and fights himself against my enemies. And now the Lord has a little left me, how weak do I find myself! O, let it teach me to depend less on myself, to be more humble, and to give more of the praise of my ability to Jesus Christ. The heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it?

Saturday, Feb. 16.—I do certainly know that I love holiness, such as the gospel requires.—At night. I have been negli-

gent for the month past in these three things: I have not been watchful enough over my appetite in eating and drinking; in rising too late; and in not applying myself enough to the duty of secret prayer.

Sabbath-day, Feb. 17, near sun-set.—Renewedly promised, that I will accept of God, for my whole portion; and that I will be contented, whatever else I am denied. I will not murmur nor be grieved, whatever prosperity, upon any account, I see others enjoy, and I am denied.

Saturday, March 2.—O, how much pleasanter is humility than pride! O, that God would fill me with exceeding great humility, and that he would evermore keep me from all pride! The pleasures of humility are really the most refined, inward and exquisite delights in the world. How hateful is a proud man! How hateful is a worm that lifts up itself with pride! What a foolish, silly, miserable, blind, deceived, poor worm am I, when pride works!

Wednesday, March 6, near sun-set.—Felt the doctrines of election, free-grace, and of

our not being able to do any thing without the grace of God; and that holiness is entirely, throughout, the work of God's Spirit, with more pleasure than before.

Monday morning, April 1.—I think it best not to allow myself to laugh at the faults, follies, and infirmities of others.

Saturday night, April 6.—This week I found myself so far gone, that it seemed to me, that I should never recover more. Let God of his mercy return unto me, and no more leave me thus to sink and decay! I know, O Lord, that without thy help, I shall fall innumerable times, notwithstanding all my resolutions, how often so ever repeated.

Saturday night, April 13.—I could pray more heartily this night, for the forgiveness of my enemies, than ever before.

Wednesday, May 1, forenoon. — Last night I came home, after my melancholy parting from New York. I have always, in every different state of life I have hitherto been in, thought the troubles and difficulties of that state to be greater than those of any other that I proposed to be in; and

when I have altered with assurance of mending myself, I have still thought the same; yea, that the difficulties of that state are greater than those of that I left last. Lord, grant that from hence I may learn to withdraw my thoughts, affections, desires, and expectations, entirely from the world, and may fix them upon the heavenly state; where there is fulness of joy; where reigns heavenly, sweet, calm, and delightful love, without alloy; where there are continually the dearest expressions of this love; where there is the enjoyment of the persons loved, without ever parting; where those persons, who appear so lovely in this world, will really be inexpressibly more lovely, and full of love to us. How sweetly will the mutual lovers join together to sing the praises of God and the Lamb! How will it fill us with joy to think, this enjoyment, these sweet exercises, will never come to an end, but will last to eternity. Remember, after journies, removes, overturnings, and alterations in the state of my life, to consider, whether therein I have managed the best way possible, respecting my soul;

and before such alterations, if foreseen, to resolve how to act.

Thursday, May 2.—I think it a very good way to examine dreams every morning when I awake; what are the nature, circumstances, principles, and ends of my imaginary actions and passions in them, to discern what are my chief inclinations, &c.

Saturday night, May 4.—Although I have in some measure subdued a disposition to chide and fret, yet I find a certain inclination which is not agreeable to christian sweetness of temper and conversation:—Too dogmatical, too much of egotism; a disposition to be telling of my own dislike and scorn; and freedom from those things that are innocent, or the common infirmities of men; and many such like things. O that God would help me to discern all the flaws and defects of my temper and conversation, and help me in the difficult work of amending them; and that he would fill me so full of christianity, that the foundation of all these disagreeable irregularities may be destroyed, and the contrary beauties may follow.

Sabbath-day, May 5, in the morning.—
This day made the 47th Resolution.

Sabbath-day, May 12.—I think I feel glad from the hope that my eternity is to be spent in spiritual and holy joys, arising from the manifestation of God's love, and the exercise of holiness and a burning love to him.

Saturday night, May 18.—I now plainly perceive what great obligations I am under to love and honour my parents. I have great reason to believe, that their counsel and education have been of great use to me; notwithstanding, at the time, it seemed to do me so little good. I have good reason to hope that their prayers for me have been, in many things, very powerful and prevalent; that God has, in many things, taken me under his care and guidance, provision and direction, in answer to their prayers. I was never made so sensible of it as now.

Wednesday, May 22, in the morning.—
Memorandum. To take special care of these following things: evil speaking, fretting, eating, drinking, and sleeping, speaking

simple verity, joining in prayer, slightness in secret prayer, listlessness and negligence, and thoughts that cherish sin.

Saturday, May 25, in the morning.—As I was this morning reading the 17th Resolution, it was suggested to me, that if I was now to die, I should wish that I had prayed more that God would make me know my state, whether it be good or bad; and that I had taken more pains to see, and narrowly search into this matter. Wherefore, *Mem.* For the future, most nicely and diligently to look into our old Divines concerning conversion. Made the 48th Resolution.

Friday, June 1, afternoon.—I have abundant cause, O merciful Father, to love thee ardently, and greatly to bless and praise thee, that thou hast heard me in my earnest request, and hast so answered my prayer for mercy to keep from decay and sinking. O, graciously, of thy mere goodness, continue to pity my misery, by reason of my sinfulness. O, my dear Redeemer, I commit myself, together with my prayer and thanksgiving, into thine hand.

Monday, July 1.—Again confirmed by

experience of the happy effects of strict temperance, with respect both to body and mind. Resolved, for the future to observe rather more of meekness, moderation, and temper in disputes.

Thursday, July 18, near sun-set.—Resolved to endeavour to make sure of that sign the apostle James gives of a perfect man, Jam. iii. 2. *If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.*

Monday, July 22.—I see there is danger of my being drawn into transgression by a fear of seeming uncivil, and of offending friends. Watch against it.

Tuesday, July 23.—When I find those groanings which cannot be uttered, that the Apostle speaks of; and those soul-breakings for the longing it hath, which the Psalmist speaks of, (Psal. cxix. 20.) let me humour and promote them to the utmost of my power, and be not weary of earnestly endeavouring to vent my desires.—I desire to count it all joy when I have occasion of great self-denial, because then I have a glorious opportunity of giving

deadly wounds' to the body of sin, and greatly confirming and establishing the new nature; to seek to mortify sin, and increase in holiness; these are the best opportunities (according to January 14,) to improve afflictions of all kinds, as blessed opportunities of forcibly bearing on in my christian course, notwithstanding that which is so very apt to discourage me, to damp the vigour of my mind, and to make me lifeless; also, as opportunities of trusting and confiding in God, habitually, according to the 57th Resolution; and of rending my heart off from the world, and setting it upon heaven alone; to repent of, and bewail my sin, and abhor myself; and as a blessed opportunity to exercise patience, to trust in God, and divert my mind from the affliction, by fixing myself in religious exercises. Also, let me comfort myself, that it is the very nature of afflictions to make the heart better; and if I am made better by them, what need I be concerned, however grievous they seem for the present?

Friday, July 26.—To be particularly

careful to keep up an inviolable trust and reliance, ease and entire rest in God, in all conditions, according to the 57th Resolution; for this I have found to be wonderfully advantageous.

Monday, July 29.—When I am concerned how I shall perform any thing to public acceptance, to be very careful that I do what is duty and prudence in the matter.

Wednesday, July 31.—Never in the least to seek to hear sarcastical relations of other's faults. Never to give credit to any thing said against others, except there is very plain reason for it; nor to behave in any respect otherwise for it.

Wednesday, August 7.—To esteem it an advantage that the duties of religion are difficult, and that many difficulties are sometimes to be gone through in the way of duty. Religion is the sweeter, and what is gained by labour is abundantly more precious; as a woman loves her child the better for having brought it forth with travail. And even as to Christ Jesus himself in his mediatorial glory, (including his

victory and triumph, and the kingdom which he has obtained,) how much more glorious, how much more excellent and precious, for his having wrought it out by such agonies!

Friday, August 9.—One thing that may be a good help towards thinking profitably in time of vacation or leisure is, that when I light on a profitable thought, I can fix my mind in order to follow it, as far as possible, to advantage.

Sabbath-day, after meeting, August 11.—Resolved always to do that which I shall wish I had done, when I see others do it. As for instance, sometimes I argue with myself, that such an act of good nature, kindness, forbearance, or forgiveness, &c. is not my duty, because it will have such and such consequences; yet, when I see others do it, then it appears amiable to me, and I wish I had done it; and I see that none of these feared inconveniences do follow.

Tuesday, August 13.—I find it would be very much to my advantage to be thoroughly acquainted with the scriptures.

When I am reading doctrinal books, or books of controversy, I can proceed with abundantly more confidence; can see upon what foundation I stand.

Thursday, August 29.—The objection my corruptions make against doing whatever my hand finds to do with my might is, that it is a constant mortification. Let this objection by no means ever prevail.

Monday, September 2.—There is much folly when I am quite sure I am in the right, and others are positive in contradicting me, in entering into a vehement or long debate upon it.

Monday, September 23.—I observe that old men seldom have any advantage of new discoveries; because, these are beside a way of thinking they have been so long used to. Resolved, if ever I live to years, that I will be impartial to hear the reasons of all pretended discoveries, and receive them, if rational, how long so ever I have been used to another way of thinking.

Thursday, October 18.—To follow the example of Mr. B——, who, though he meets with great difficulties, yet under-

takes them with a smiling countenance, as though he thought them but little; and speaks of them as if they were very small.

Thursday, November 26.—It is a most evil and pernicious practice in meditating on our afflictions, to ruminate on the aggravations of the affliction, and reckon up the evil circumstances thereof, dwelling long on the dark side; it doubles and trebles the affliction. And so, when speaking of them to others as bad as we can, and use our eloquence to set forth our own troubles; we thus are all the while making new trouble, and feeding the old; whereas the contrary practice would starve our afflictions. If we dwelt on the light side of things in our thoughts, and extenuated them all that possibly we could when speaking of them, we should then think little of them ourselves; and the affliction would really, in a great measure, vanish away.

Thursday night, December 12.—If at any time I am forced to tell persons of that wherein I think they are something

to blame; for avoiding the important evil that would otherwise ensue, resolved not to tell it them in such a manner, that there shall be a probability of their taking it as the effect of little, fretting, angry emotions of mind.

December 31, at night. — Concluded never to suffer nor express any angry emotions of mind more or less, except the honour of God calls for it, in zeal for him, or to preserve myself from being trampled on.

Wednesday, Jan. 1, 1724. — Not to spend too much time in thinking even of important and necessary worldly business. To allow every thing its proportion of thought, according to its urgency and importance.

Friday, Jan. 10. (After short-hand notes) Remember to act according to Prov. xii. 23. *A prudent man concealeth knowledge.*

Monday, Feb. 3. — Let every thing have the value now, that it will have on a sick bed; and frequently in my pursuits of whatever kind, let this come into my mind; "How much shall I value this on my death bed?"

Wednesday, Feb. 5.—Have not in time past, in my prayers, insisted enough upon glorifying God in the world, and the advancement of the kingdom of Christ, the prosperity of the church, and the good of men. Determined that this objection is without weight, viz. “That it is not likely that God will make great alterations in the whole world, and overturnings in kingdoms and nations, only for the prayers of one obscure person, seeing such things used to be done in answer to the united, earnest prayers of the whole church; and if my prayers should have some influence, it would be but imperceptible and small.”

Thursday, Feb. 6.—More convinced than ever of the usefulness of religious conversation. I find by conversing on natural philosophy, I gain knowledge abundantly faster, and see the reasons of things much clearer, than in private study. Wherefore, resolved earnestly to seek at all times for religious conversation; and for those persons that I can with profit, delight, and freedom so converse with.

Sabbath-day, Feb. 23.—If I act according to my resolution, I shall desire riches no otherwise than as they are helpful to religion. But this I determine, as what is really evident from many parts of scripture, that to fallen man they have a greater tendency to hurt religion.

Saturday, May 23.—How it comes about I know not; but I have remarked it hitherto, that at those times when I have read the scriptures most, I have evermore been most lively, and in the best frame.

Saturday night, June 6.—This has been a remarkable week with me, with respect to despondencies, fears, perplexities, multitudes of cares and distraction of thought; being the week I came hither (to New-Haven) in order to entrance upon the office of tutor of the college. I have now abundant reason to be convinced of the troublesomeness and perpetual vexation of the world.

Tuesday, July 7.—When I am giving the relation of a thing, let me abstain from altering, either in the matter or manner of

speaking, so much, as that if every one afterward should alter as much, it would at last come to be properly false.

Tuesday, Sept. 2.—By a sparing diet, and eating what is light and easy of digestion, I shall doubtless be able to think more clearly; and shall gain time, 1st, By lengthening my life; 2dly, Shall need less time for digestion after meals; 3dly, Shall be able to study closer without wrong to my health; 4thly, Shall need less time to sleep; 5thly, Shall more seldom be troubled with the head-ach.

Sabbath-day, Nov. 22.—Considering that by-standers always espy some faults which we do not see, or at least are not so fully sensible of ourselves; for there are many secret workings of corruption which escape our sight, and others only are sensible of; resolved, therefore, that I will, if I can by any convenient means, learn what faults others find in me, or what things they see in me that appear any way blame-worthy, unlovely, or unbecoming.

SECT. III.

Some Account of his Conversion, Experience, and Religious Exercises, written by himself.

The foregoing extracts were written by Mr. Edwards when about twenty years of age, as appears by the dates. The judicious reader, therefore, keeping this in mind, will make proper allowance for some things which may appear like the productions of a young christian, both as to the matter, and the manner of expression. And indeed, the whole being taken together, these apparent blemishes have an important use. For hereby all seems more natural and genuine; while the strength of his resolution, the fervour of his mind, and a skill in discriminating divine things, so seldom found even to old age, appear the more striking. A picture of human nature in its present state, though highly improved by grace, cannot be a true resemblance of the original, if it be drawn all light, and no shades. In this view we shall be led to admire Mr. Edwards's conscientious strictness,

his diligence and zeal, his deep experience in some particulars, and his accurate judgment respecting the most important parts of true religion, at so early a period of life. Here we not only have the most convincing evidence of his sincerity in religion, and of his engaging in a life devoted to God in good earnest, so as to make it his one great business; but learn also, through his great attention to this matter, how in many instances he acquired the judgment and experience of grey hairs.

Behold the commencement of a life so eminently holy and useful! Behold the views, the exercises, the resolutions of a man who became one of the greatest divines of his age; one who had the applause and admiration of America, Britain, Holland, and Germany, for his piety, judgment, and great usefulness. Behold here an excitement to the young, to devote themselves to God with great sincerity, and enter on the work of strict religion without delay; and more especially, those who are looking forward towards the work of the ministry. Behold then, ye students in

divinity, our future preachers and writers; the most immediate and direct, yea the only way to answer the good ends which you profess to seek. "Go, ye, and do likewise."

It is to be lamented, that there is so much reason to think, there are few instances of such early piety in our day. If the protestant world abounded with young persons of this stamp; young men, preparing for the work of the ministry with such a temper, such exercises, and such resolutions, what a delightful prospect would be afforded of the near approach of happier days, than the church of God has ever yet seen! What pleasing hopes, that the great and merciful head of the church was about to send forth labourers, faithful, successful labourers into his harvest; and bless his people with "pastors which shall feed them with knowledge and understanding!"

But if our youth neglect all proper improvement of the mind; are fearful of seriousness and strict piety; choose to live at a distance from all appearance of it; and are addicted to worldly pleasures; what a

gloomy prospect is exhibited! If they who enter upon the work of the ministry, from a gay, careless, and what may justly be called a vicious life, betake themselves to a little superficial study of divinity, and soon begin to preach; while all the external seriousness and zeal they assume, is only from worldly motives; they being without any inward, experimental acquaintance with divine things, and even so much as any taste for true theology; no wonder if the people perish for lack of spiritual knowledge.

But, as the best comment on the foregoing Resolutions and Diary; and that the reader may have a more full and instructive survey of Mr. Edwards's entrance on a religious life, and progress in it, as to the views and exercises of his mind, a brief account is here inserted, which was found among his papers, in his own hand-writing; and which, it seems, was written nearly twenty years after, for his own private advantage.

“ I had a variety of concerns and exercises about my soul from my childhood; but had two more remarkable seasons of

awakening, before I met with that change by which I was brought to those new dispositions, and that new sense of things, that I have since had. The first time was when I was a boy, some years before I went to college, at a time of remarkable awakening in my father's congregation. I was then very much affected for many months, and concerned about the things of religion, and my soul's salvation; and was abundant in duties. I used to pray five times a day in secret, and to spend much time in religious talk with other boys; and used to meet with them to pray together. I experienced I know not what kind of delight in religion. My mind was much engaged in it, and had much self-righteous pleasure; and it was my delight to abound in religious duties. I with some of my school-mates joined together, and built a booth in a swamp, in a very retired spot, for a place of prayer.—And besides, I had particular secret places of my own in the woods, where I used to retire by myself; and was from time to time much affected. My affections seemed to be lively and easily

moved, and I seemed to be in my element when engaged in religious duties. And I am ready to think, many are deceived with such affections, and such a kind of delight as I then had in religion, and mistake it for grace.

“But in process of time, my convictions and affections wore off; and I entirely lost all those affections and delights, and left off secret prayer, at least as to any constant performance of it; and returned like a dog to his vomit, and went on in the ways of sin. Indeed I was at times very uneasy, especially towards the latter part of my time at college; when it pleased God to seize me with a pleurisy; in which he brought me nigh to the grave, and shook me over the pit of hell. And yet, it was not long after my recovery, before I fell again into my old ways of sin. But God would not suffer me to go on with any quietness; I had great and violent inward struggles, till, after many conflicts with wicked inclinations, repeated resolutions, and bonds that I laid myself under by a kind of vows to God, I was brought wholly

to break off all former wicked ways, and all ways of known outward sin ; and to apply myself to seek salvation, and practise many religious duties ; but without that kind of affection and delight which I had formerly experienced. My concern now wrought more by inward struggles and conflicts, and self-reflections. I made seeking my salvation the main business of my life. But yet, it seems to me, I sought after a miserable manner ; which has made me sometimes since to question, whether ever it issued in that which was saving ; being ready to doubt, whether such miserable seeking ever succeeded. I was indeed brought to seek salvation in a manner that I never was before ; I felt a spirit to part with all things in the world, for an interest in Christ. My concern continued and prevailed, with many exercising thoughts and inward struggles ; but yet it never seemed to be proper to express that concern by the name of terror.

“ From my childhood up, my mind had been full of objections against the doctrine of God’s sovereignty, in choosing whom he

would to eternal life, and rejecting whom he pleased; leaving them eternally to perish, and be everlastingly tormented in hell. It used to appear like a horrible doctrine to me. But I remember the time very well, when I seemed to be convinced, and fully satisfied, as to this sovereignty of God, and his justice in thus eternally disposing of men, according to his sovereign pleasure. But I never could give an account how, or by what means, I was thus convinced, not in the least imagining at the time, nor a long time after, that there was any extraordinary influence of God's Spirit in it; but only that now I saw further, and my reason apprehended the justice and reasonableness of it. However, my mind rested in it; and it put an end to all those cavils and objections. And there has been a wonderful alteration in my mind, with respect to the doctrine of God's sovereignty, from that day to this; so that I scarce ever have found so much as the rising of an objection against it, in the most absolute sense, in God shewing mercy to whom he will shew mercy, and hardening whom he will. God's

absolute sovereignty and justice, with respect to salvation and damnation, is what my mind seems to rest assured of, as much as of any thing that I see with my eyes; at least it is so at times. But I have often, since that first conviction, had quite another kind of sense of God's sovereignty than I had then. I have often since had not only a conviction, but a *delightful* conviction. The doctrine has very often appeared exceedingly pleasant, bright, and sweet. Absolute sovereignty is what I love to ascribe to God. But my first conviction was not so.

“The first instance that I remember of that sort of inward, sweet delight in God and divine things that I have lived much in since, was on reading those words, 1 Tim. i. 17. *Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever, Amen.* As I read the words, there came into my soul, and was as it were diffused through it, a sense of the glory of the Divine Being; a new sense, quite different from any thing I ever experienced before. Never any words of

scripture seemed to me as these words did. I thought with myself, how excellent a Being that was, and how happy I should be, if I might enjoy that God, and be wrapt up to him in heaven, and be as it were swallowed up in him for ever! I kept saying, and, as it were, singing over these words of scripture to myself; and went to pray to God that I might enjoy him, and prayed in a manner quite different from what I used to do; with a new sort of affection. But it never came into my thought, that there was any thing spiritual, or of a saving nature in this.

“ From about that time I began to have a new kind of apprehensions and ideas of Christ, and the work of redemption, and the glorious way of salvation by him. An inward sweet sense of these things, at times, came into my heart; and my soul was led away in pleasant views and contemplations of them. And my mind was greatly engaged to spend my time in reading and meditating on Christ, on the beauty and excellency of his person, and the lovely way of salvation by free grace in him. I found no

books so delightful to me as those that treated of these subjects. Those words, Cant. ii. 1. used to be abundantly with me, *I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the vallies*. The words seemed to me, sweetly to represent the loveliness and beauty of Jesus Christ. The whole book of Canticles used to be pleasant to me; and I used to be much in reading it, about that time; and found, from time to time, an inward sweetness, that would carry me away in my contemplations. This I know not how to express otherwise, than by a calm, sweet abstraction of soul from all the concerns of this world; and sometimes a kind of vision, or fixed ideas and imaginations, of being alone in the mountains, or some solitary wilderness, far from all mankind, sweetly conversing with Christ, and wrapt and swallowed up in God. The sense I had of divine things, would often of a sudden kindle up, as it were, a sweet burning in my heart; an ardour of soul, that I know not how to express.

“ Not long after I first began to experience these things, I gave an account to

my father of some things that had passed in my mind. I was pretty much affected by the discourse we had together; and when the discourse was ended, I walked abroad alone, in a solitary place in my father's pasture, for contemplation. And as I was walking there, and looking up on the sky and clouds, there came into my mind so sweet a sense of the glorious *majesty* and *grace* of God, that I know not how to express.—I seemed to see them both in a sweet conjunction; majesty and meekness joined together: it was a sweet, and gentle, and holy majesty; and also a majestic meekness; an awful sweetness; a high, and great, and holy gentleness.

“After this my sense of divine things gradually increased, and became more and more lively, and had more of that inward sweetness. The appearance of every thing was altered; there seemed to be, as it were, a calm, sweet cast, or appearance of divine glory, in almost every thing. God's excellency, his wisdom, his purity, and love, seemed to appear in every thing; in the sun, moon; and stars; in the clouds, and blue sky; in the

grass, flowers, trees; in the water, and all nature; which used greatly to fix my mind. I often used to sit and view the moon for continuance; and in the day, spent much time in viewing the clouds and sky, to behold the sweet glory of God in these things: in the mean time, singing forth, with a low voice, my contemplations of the Creator and Redeemer. And scarce any thing among all the works of nature, was so sweet to me as thunder and lightning; formerly, nothing had been so terrible to me. Before, I used to be uncommonly terrified with thunder, and to be struck with terror when I saw a thunder-storm rising; but now, on the contrary, it rejoiced me. I felt God, so to speak, at the first appearance of a thunder-storm; and used to take the opportunity, at such times, to fix myself in order to view the clouds, and see the lightnings play, and hear the majestic and awful voice of God's thunder, which oftentimes was exceedingly entertaining, leading me to sweet contemplations of my great and glorious God. While thus engaged, it always seemed natural to me to

sing, or chaunt forth my meditations; or, to speak my thoughts in soliloquies with a singing voice.

“ I felt then great satisfaction, as to my good state; but that did not content me. I had vehement longings of soul after God and Christ, and after more holiness, where-with my heart seemed to be full and ready to break; which often brought to my mind the words of the Psalmist, Psal. cxix. 28: *My soul breaketh for the longing it hath.* I often felt a mourning and lamenting in my heart, that I had not turned to God sooner, that I might have had more time to grow in grace. My mind was greatly fixed on divine things; almost perpetually in the contemplation of them. I spent most of my time in thinking of divine things, year after year; often walking alone in the woods, and solitary places, for meditation, soliloquy, and prayer, and converse with God; and it was always my manner, at such times, to sing forth my contemplations. I was almost constantly in ejaculatory prayer, wherever I was. Prayer seemed to be natural to me, as the breath

by which the inward burnings of my heart had vent. The delights which I now felt in the things of religion, were of an exceedingly different kind from those before-mentioned, that I had when a boy; and what I then had no more notion of, than one born blind has of pleasant and beautiful colours. They were of a more inward, pure, soul-animating, and refreshing nature. Those former delights never reached the heart; and did not arise from any sight of the divine excellency of the things of God; or any taste of the soul-satisfying and life-giving good there is in them.

“ My sense of divine things seemed gradually to increase, till I went to preach at New York, which was about a year and a half after they began; and while I was there, I felt them, very sensibly, in a much higher degree than I had done before. My longings after God and holiness were much increased. Pure and humble, holy and heavenly christianity, appeared exceedingly amiable to me. I felt a burning desire to be in every thing a complete christian, and conformed to the blessed

image of Christ; and that I might live, in all things, according to the pure, sweet, and blessed rules of the gospel. I had an eager thirsting after progress in these things; which put me upon pursuing and pressing after them. It was my continual strife day and night, and constant inquiry, how I should *be* more holy, and *live* more holily, and more becoming a child of God, and a disciple of Christ. I now sought an increase of grace and holiness, and a holy life, with much more earnestness than ever I sought grace before I had it. I used to be continually examining myself, and studying and contriving for likely ways and means how I should live holily, with far greater diligence and earnestness than ever I pursued any thing in my life; but yet with too great a dependence on my own strength, which afterwards proved a great damage to me. My experience had not then taught me, as it has done since, my extreme feebleness and impotence, every manner of way; and the bottomless depths of secret corruption and deceit there were in my heart. However, I went on.

with my eager pursuit after more holiness and conformity to Christ.

“ The heaven I desired was a heaven of holiness; to be with God, and to spend my eternity in divine love, and holy communion with Christ. My mind was very much taken up with contemplations on heaven, and the enjoyments there; and living there in perfect holiness, humility, and love; and it used at that time to appear a great part of the happiness of heaven, that there the saints could express their love to Christ. It appeared to me a great clog and burden, that what I felt within, I could not express as I desired. The inward ardour of my soul seemed to be hindered and pent up, and could not freely flame out as it would. I used often to think, how in heaven this principle should freely and fully vent and express itself. Heaven appeared exceedingly delightful, as a world of love; and that all happiness consisted in living in pure, humble, heavenly, divine love.

“ I remember the thoughts I used then to have of holiness; and said sometimes to myself, ‘ I do certainly know that I love

holiness, such as the gospel prescribes.' It appeared to me, that there was nothing in it but what was ravishingly lovely; the highest beauty and amiableness—a *divine* beauty; far purer than any thing here upon earth; and that every thing else was like mire and defilement in comparison of it.

“Holiness, as I then wrote down some of my contemplations on it, appeared to me to be of a sweet, pleasant, charming, serene, calm nature; which brought an inexpressible purity, brightness, peacefulness and ravishment to the soul. In other words, that it made the soul like a field or garden of God, with all manner of pleasant flowers; all pleasant, delightful, and undisturbed; enjoying a sweet calm, and, the gently vivifying beams of the sun. The soul of a true christian, as I then wrote my meditations, appeared like such a little white flower as we see in the spring of the year; low and humble on the ground, opening its bosom, to receive the pleasant beams of the sun's glory; rejoicing, as it were, in a calm rapture; diffusing around a sweet fragranc

standing peacefully and lovingly, in the midst of other flowers round about; all in like manner opening their bosoms, to drink in the light of the sun. There was no part of creature-holiness, that I had so great a sense of its loveliness, as humility, brokenness of heart, and poverty of spirit; and there was nothing that I so earnestly longed for. My heart panted after this,—to lie low before God, as in the dust; that I might be nothing, and that God might be ALL, that I might become as a little child.

“While at New York, I sometimes was much affected with reflections on my past life, considering how late it was before I began to be truly religious; and how wickedly I had lived till then: and once so as to weep abundantly, and for a considerable time together.

“On January 12, 1723, I made a solemn dedication of myself to God, and wrote it down; giving up myself, and all that I had, to God; to be for the future in no respect my own; to act as one that had no right to himself, in any respect. And I solemnly

vowed to take God for my whole portion and felicity; looking on nothing else as any part of my happiness, nor acting as if it were; and his law for the constant rule of my obedience: engaging to fight with all my might, against the world, the flesh, and the devil, to the end of my life. But I have reason to be infinitely humbled, when I consider, how much I have failed of answering my obligation.

“I had then abundance of sweet religious conversation in the family where I lived, with Mr. John Smith and his pious mother. My heart was knit in affection to those in whom were appearances of true piety; and I could bear the thoughts of no other companions, but such as were holy, and the disciples of the blessed Jesus. I had great longings for the advancement of Christ's kingdom in the world; and my secret prayer used to be, in great part, taken up in praying for it. If I heard the least hint of any thing that happened, in any part of the world, that appeared, in some respect or other, to have a favourable aspect on the interest of Christ's kingdom,

my soul eagerly caught at it; and it would much animate and refresh me. I used to be eager to read public news-letters, mainly for that end; to see if I could not find some news favourable to the interest of religion in the world.

“ I very frequently used to retire into a solitary place, on the banks of Hudson’s River, at some distance from the city, for contemplation on divine things, and secret converse with God; and had many sweet hours there. Sometimes Mr. Smith and I walked there together, to converse on the things of God; and our conversation used to turn much on the advancement of Christ’s kingdom in the world, and the glorious things that God would accomplish for his church in the latter days. I had then, and at other times, the greatest delight in the holy scriptures, of any book whatsoever. Oftentimes in reading it, every word seemed to touch my heart. I felt a harmony between something in my heart, and those sweet and powerful words. I seemed often to see so much light exhibited by every sentence, and such a refreshing food com-

municated, that I could not get along in reading; often dwelling long on one sentence, to see the wonders contained in it; and yet almost every sentence seemed to be full of wonders.

“ I came away from New York in the month of April, 1723, and had a most bitter parting with Madam Smith and her son. My heart seemed to sink within me at leaving the family and city, where I had enjoyed so many sweet and pleasant days. I went from New York to Weathersfield, by water; and as I sailed away, I kept sight of the city as long as I could. However, that night after this sorrowful parting, I was greatly comforted in God at Westchester, where we went ashore to lodge; and had a pleasant time of it all the voyage to Saybrook. It was sweet to me to think of meeting dear christians in heaven, where we should never part more. At Saybrook we went ashore to lodge on Saturday, and there kept the Sabbath; where I had a sweet and refreshing season, walking alone in the fields.

"After I came home to Windsor, I remained much in a like frame of mind, as when at New York; only sometimes I felt my heart ready to sink with the thoughts of my friends at New York. My support was in contemplations on the heavenly state; as I find in my Diary of May 1, 1723. It was a comfort to think of that state, where there is fulness of joy; where reigns heavenly, calm, and delightful love, without alloy; where there are continually the dearest expressions of this love; where is the enjoyment of the persons loved, without ever parting; where those persons who appear so lovely in this world, will really be inexpressibly more lovely, and full of love to us. And how sweetly will the mutual lovers join together to sing the praises of God and the Lamb! How will it fill us with joy to think, that this enjoyment, these sweet exercises, will never cease, but will last to all eternity!—I continued much in the same frame, in the general, as when at New York, till I went to Newhaven as tutor of the college; par-

ticularly once at Bolton, on a journey from Boston, while walking out alone in the fields. After I went to Newhaven I sunk in religion; my mind being diverted from my eager pursuits after holiness, by some affairs that greatly perplexed and distracted my thoughts.

“In September, 1725, I was taken ill at Newhaven, and while endeavouring to go home to Windsor, was so ill at the North Village, that I could go no further; where I lay sick for about a quarter of a year. In this sickness God was pleased to visit me again with the sweet influences of his Spirit. My mind was greatly engaged there on divine, pleasant contemplations, and longings of soul. I observed that those who watched with me, would often be looking out wishfully for the morning; which brought to my mind those words of the Psalmist, and which my soul with delight made its own language, *My soul waiteth for the Lord, more than they that watch for the morning, I say, more than they that watch for the morning*; and when the light of day came in at the windows it

refreshed my soul from one morning to another. It seemed to be some image of the light of God's glory.

"I remember, about that time, I used greatly to long for the conversion of some that I was concerned with; I could gladly honour them, and with delight be a servant to them, and lie at their feet, if they were but truly holy. But, some time after this, I was again greatly diverted in my mind with some temporal concerns that exceedingly took up my thoughts, greatly to the wounding of my soul; and went on through various exercises, that it would be tedious to relate, which gave me much more experience of my own heart than ever I had before.

"Since I came to this town,* I have often had sweet complacency in God, in views of his glorious perfections, and the excellency of Jesus Christ. God has appeared to me a glorious and lovely being, chiefly on the account of his holiness. The holiness of God has always appeared to

* Northampton.

me the most lovely of all his attributes. The doctrines of God's absolute sovereignty, and free grace, in shewing mercy to whom he would shew mercy; and man's absolute dependence on the operations of God's Holy Spirit, have very often appeared to me as sweet and glorious doctrines. These doctrines have been much my delight. God's sovereignty has ever appeared to me great part of his glory. It has often been my delight to approach God, and adore him as a sovereign God, and ask sovereign mercy of him.

"I have loved the doctrines of the gospel; they have been to my soul like green pastures. The gospel has seemed to me the richest treasure; the treasure that I have most desired, and longed that it might dwell richly in me. The way of salvation by Christ has appeared, in a general way, glorious and excellent, most pleasant and most beautiful. It has often seemed to me, that it would, in a great measure, spoil heaven, to receive it in any other way. That text has often been affecting and delightful to me, Isa. xxxii. 2.

A man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place; as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

“ It has often appeared to me delightful; to be united to Christ; to have him for my head, and to be a member of his body; also to have Christ for my teacher and prophet. I very often think with sweetness, and longings, and pantings of soul, of being a little child, taking hold of Christ, to be led by him through the wilderness of this world. That text, Matt. xviii. 3. has often been sweet to me, *Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.* I love to think of coming to Christ, to receive salvation of him, poor in spirit, and quite empty of self, humbly exalting him alone; cut off entirely from my own root, in order to grow into, and out of Christ: to have God in Christ to be all in all; and to live by faith on the Son of God, a life of humble, unfeigned confidence in him. That scripture has often been sweet to me, Psal. cxv. 1. *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto*

us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake. And those words of Christ, Luke, x. 21. In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes : even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. That sovereignty of God which Christ rejoiced in, seemed to me worthy of such joy; and that rejoicing seemed to shew the excellency of Christ, and of what spirit he was.

“ Sometimes, only mentioning a single word caused my heart to burn within me; or only seeing the name of Christ, or the name of some attribute of God. And God has appeared glorious to me, on account of the Trinity. It has made me have exalting thoughts of God, that he subsists in three persons; Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The sweetest joys and delights I have experienced, have not been those that have arisen from a hope of my own good estate; but in a direct view of the glorious things of the gospel. When I enjoy this sweet-

ness, it seems to carry me above the thoughts of my own estate; it seems at such times a loss that I cannot bear, to take off my eye from the glorious, pleasant object I behold without me; to turn my eye in upon myself, and my own good estate.

“My heart has been much on the advancement of Christ’s kingdom in the world. The histories of the past advancement of Christ’s kingdom have been sweet to me. When I have read histories of past ages, the pleasantest thing in all my reading has been, to read of the kingdom of Christ being promoted. And when I have expected, in my reading, to come to any such thing, I have rejoiced in the prospect; all the way as I read. And my mind has been much entertained and delighted with the scripture promises and prophecies, which relate to the future glorious advancement of Christ’s kingdom upon earth.

“I have sometimes had a sense of the excellent fulness of Christ, and his meetness and suitableness as a Saviour; whereby he has appeared to me, far above all, the

chief of ten thousands. His blood and atonement have appeared sweet, and his righteousness sweet; which was always accompanied with ardency of spirit; and inward strugglings and breathings, and groanings that cannot be uttered, to be emptied of myself, and swallowed up in Christ.

“Once, as I rode out into the woods for my health, in 1737, having alighted from my horse in a retired place, as my manner commonly has been, to walk for divine contemplation and prayer, I had a view, that for me was extraordinary, of the glory of the Son of God, as Mediator between God and man, and his wonderful, great, full, pure and sweet grace and love, and meek and gentle condescension. This grace that appeared so calm and sweet, appeared also great above the heavens. The person of Christ appeared ineffably excellent, with an excellency great enough to swallow up all thought and conception—which continued, as near as I can judge, about an hour; which kept me, the greater part of the time, in a flood of tears, and

weeping aloud. I felt an ardency of soul to be, what I know not otherwise how to express, emptied and annihilated; to lie in the dust, and to be full of Christ alone; to love him with a holy and pure love; to trust in him; to live upon him; to serve and follow him; and to be perfectly sanctified and made pure, with a divine and heavenly purity. I have, several other times, had views very much of the same nature, and which have had the same effects.

“ I have, many times, had a sense of the glory of the third person in the Trinity, in his office of Sanctifier; in his holy operations, communicating divine light and life to the soul. God, in the communications of his Holy Spirit, has appeared as an infinite fountain of divine glory and sweetness; being full, and sufficient to fill and satisfy the soul; pouring forth itself in sweet communications; like the sun in its glory, sweetly and pleasantly diffusing light and life. And I have sometimes had an affecting sense of the excellency of the word of God, as a word of life; as the

light of life; a sweet, excellent, life-giving word; accompanied with a thirsting after that word, that it might dwell richly in my heart.

“Often, since I lived in this town, I have had very affecting views of my own sinfulness and vileness; very frequently to such a degree as to hold me in a kind of loud weeping, sometimes for a considerable time together; so that I have often been forced to shut myself up. I have had a vastly greater sense of my own wickedness, and the badness of my heart, than ever I had before my conversion.* It has often ap-

* Mr. Edwards does not say, that he *had* more wickedness, and badness of heart, after his conversion, than he had before; but that he had a *greater sense* thereof. Thus a blind man may *have* his garden *full* of noxious weeds, and yet not *see* or be *sensible* of them. But should the garden be in great part cleared of these, and furnished with many beautiful and salutary plants; and supposing the owner now to have the power of discriminating objects of sight; in this case, he would *have* less, but would *see*, and have a *sense* of more. And thus it was that St. Paul, though greatly freed from sin, yet *saw* and *felt* himself as “the chief of sinners.” To which may be added, that the better the organ, and the clearer the light may be, the stronger will be the *sense* excited by sin or holiness.

peared to me, that if God should mark iniquity against me, I should appear the very worst of all mankind; of all that have been, since the beginning of the world to this time: and that I should have by far the lowest place in hell. When others, that have come to talk with me about their soul-concerns, have expressed the sense they have had of their own wickedness, by saying that it seemed to them, that they were as bad as the devil himself, I thought their expressions seemed exceedingly faint and feeble, to represent my wickedness.

“ My wickedness, as I am in myself, has long appeared to me perfectly ineffable, and swallowing up all thought and imagination; like an infinite deluge, or mountains over my head. I know not how to express better what my sins appear to me to be, than by heaping infinite upon infinite, and multiplying infinite by infinite. Very often, for these many years, these expressions are in my mind, and in my mouth, ‘ Infinite upon infinite—Infinite upon infinite!’—When I look into my heart, and take a view of my wickedness, it looks like an abyss

infinitely deeper than hell. And it appears to me, that were it not for free grace, exalted and raised up to the infinite height of all the fulness and glory of the great Jehovah, and the arm of his power and grace stretched forth in all the majesty of his power, and in all the glory of his sovereignty, I should appear sunk down in my sins below hell itself; far beyond the sight of every thing, but the eye of sovereign grace, that can pierce even down to such a depth. And yet it seems to me, that my conviction of sin is exceedingly small, and faint; it is enough to amaze me, that I have no more sense of my sin. I know certainly, that I have very little sense of my sinfulness. When I have had turns of weeping and crying for my sins, I thought I knew at the time, that my repentance was nothing to my sin.

"I have greatly longed of late for a broken heart, and to lie low before God; and, when I ask for humility, I cannot bear the thoughts of being no more humble than other christians. It seems to me, that though their degrees of humility may be

suitable for them, yet it would be a vile self-exaltation in me, not to be the lowest in humility of all mankind. Others speak of their longing to be 'humbled to the dust;' that may be a proper expression for them, but I always think of myself, that I ought (and it is an expression that has long been natural for me to use in prayer) 'to lie infinitely low before God.' And it is affecting to think, how ignorant I was, when a young christian, of the bottomless, infinite depths of wickedness, pride, hypocrisy, and deceit, left in my heart.

"I have a much greater sense of my universal, exceeding dependence on God's grace and strength, and mere good pleasure, of late, than I used formerly to have; and have experienced more of an abhorrence of my own righteousness. The very thought of any joy arising in me, on any consideration of my own amiableness, performances, or experiences, or any goodness of heart or life, is nauseous and detestable to me. And yet I am greatly afflicted with a proud and self-righteous spirit, much more sensibly than I used to be formerly. I see

that serpent rising and putting forth its head continually, every where, all around me.

“ Though it seems to me, that, in some respects, I was a far better christian, for two or three years after my first conversion, than I am now; and lived in a more constant delight and pleasure; yet, of late years, I have had a more full and constant sense of the absolute sovereignty of God, and a delight in that sovereignty; and have had more of a sense of the glory of Christ, as a mediator revealed in the gospel. On one Saturday night, in particular, I had such a discovery of the excellency of the gospel above all other doctrines, that I could not but say to myself, ‘ This is my chosen light, my chosen doctrine:’ and of Christ, ‘ This is my chosen Prophet.’ It appeared sweet, beyond all expression, to follow Christ, and to be taught, and enlightened, and instructed by him; to learn of him, and live to him. Another Saturday night, (Jan. 1739) I had such a sense, how sweet and blessed a thing it was to walk in the way of duty; to do that which was right

and meet to be done, and agreeable to the holy mind of God; that it caused me to break forth into a kind of loud weeping, which held me some time, so that I was forced to shut myself up, and fasten the doors. I could not but, as it were, cry out 'How happy are they which do that which is right in the sight of God! They are blessed indeed, they are the happy ones!' I had, at the same time, a very affecting sense, how meet and suitable it was that God should govern the world, and order all things according to his own pleasure; and I rejoiced in it, that God reigned, and that his will was done."

CHAP. III.

His general Deportment, particularly while at Northampton.

IN the first chapter of these Memoirs, we have seen that Mr. Edwards, having taken his Master's degree, was very soon invited to be tutor of the college where he received

his education, and which conferred upon him that degree; a clear indication that the managers had a high opinion of his talents and qualifications, when only in the twenty-first year of his age. It must be owned, that this was an engagement of great consequence for so young a man; especially, considering that no small portion of his time had been devoted to ministerial occupations, and the requisite preparatory studies which relate exclusively to that important business. But the strength of his mind overcame difficulties, which to the generality of students appear insuperable. It must be allowed, indeed, that Mr. Edwards was not in what some call the highest class of *learned* men; for his time, his means, and his duties, did not allow of such an attainment. We should recollect, however; what Mr. Locke somewhere very properly observes, that though men of much reading "are greatly *learned*, yet they may be but little *knowing*." In some situations and circumstances, he might have been a great linguist, a profound mathematician, a distinguished natural philosopher; but, (with-

out any designed reflection on those who excel in these or any other branches of literature and science,) he was far more happily employed, both for himself and others. In fact, he has given proofs of a mind so uncommonly vigorous and enlightened, that it is rather a matter of joy it was not engrossed by studies, which would have rendered him only the admiration of a few, but prevented him from producing those works which are of universal importance, and in which he appears as the instructor of all. He had, in short, the best and sublimest kind of knowledge, without being too much encumbered with what was unnecessary, or but little compatible with his calling.

We have also seen that Mr. Edwards resigned the office of tutor at Yale College, when he had been there, in that capacity, a little more than two years, in consequence of an invitation from Northampton, in Massachusetts, in order to assist his mother's father, the aged and venerable Mr. Stoddard.—In the present chapter, we propose to detail his general demeanour, more

particularly while at this place; which, in connection with the uncommon revival of religion there, of which he was the happy and honoured instrument, is a very interesting period of his life.

He who enters into the true spirit of Mr. Edwards's writings, and especially of the ample extracts we have given from his private papers, cannot question that he made conscience of private devotion; but as he made a secret of such exercises, nothing can be said of them but what his papers discover, and what may be fairly inferred from circumstances. It appears, by his Diary, that in his youth he determined to practise secret prayer more than twice a day, when circumstances would allow; and there is much evidence that he was frequent and punctual in that duty, often kept days of fasting and prayer, and set apart portions of time for devout meditations on spiritual and eternal things, as part of his religious exercises in retirement.

So far as it can be known, he was much on his knees in secret, and in devoutly.

reading God's word, and meditation upon it. And his constant solemn converse with God in these exercises, made his face, as it were, to shine before others. His appearance, his countenance, his words, and whole demeanour, (though without any thing of affected grimace, or sour austerity,) were attended with a seriousness, gravity, and solemnity, which were the genuine indications of a deep, abiding sense of divine things on his mind, and of his living constantly in the fear of God.

Agreeably to his resolutions, he was very careful and abstemious in eating and drinking; as doubtless was necessary for so great a student, and a person of so delicate a make as he was, in order to be comfortable and useful. When he had, by careful observation, found what kind, and what quantity of diet best suited his constitution, and rendered him most fit to pursue his work, he was very strict and exact in complying with it. In this respect he *lived by rule*; and herein he constantly practised great self-denial; which he also did in his constant early rising, in order to redeem time for

study. He accustomed himself to rise at four, or between four and five, in the morning.

Though he was of a tender constitution, yet few students are capable of a closer or longer application, than he was. He commonly spent thirteen hours, every day, in his study. His usual recreation in summer, was riding on horseback and walking. He would commonly, unless prevented by company, ride two or three miles after dinner to some lonely grove, were he would dismount and walk a while. At such times he generally carried his pen and ink with him, to note any thought that might be suggested, and which promised some light on any important subject. In the winter, he was wont, almost daily, to take an axe, and chop wood, moderately, for the space of half an hour or more.

He had an uncommon thirst for knowledge, in the pursuit of which he spared no cost or pains. He read all the books, especially books of divinity, that he could procure, from which he might hope to de-

rive any aid in his pursuit of knowledge. And in this he did not confine himself to authors of any particular sect or denomination; but even took much pains to obtain the works of the most noted writers who advanced a scheme of divinity most opposite to his own principles. But he studied the bible more than all other books, and more than most other divines do. His uncommon acquaintance with the scriptures appears in his sermons, and in most of his publications; and his great attention in studying them is manifest in his manuscript notes upon them; of which a more particular account will be given hereafter. He drew his religious principles from the bible, and not from any human system or body of divinity. Though his principles were *Calvinistic*, yet he called no man Father. He thought and judged for himself, and was truly very much of an original. Reading was not the only method he took to improve his mind; he was much given to writing, without which, probably, no student can make improvements to the best advantage. Agreeably to Resolution 11th,

he applied himself, with all his might, to find out the truth: he searched for understanding and knowledge as for silver, and digged for it as for hid treasures. Every thought, on any subject, which appeared to him worth pursuing and preserving, he prosecuted as far as he then could, with a pen in his hand. Thus he was all his days, like the busy bee, collecting from every opening flower, and storing up a stock of knowledge, which was indeed sweet to him, as the honey and the honey-comb. And as he advanced in years and in knowledge, his pen was more and more employed, and his manuscripts grew much faster on his hands.

He was thought by some, who had but a slight acquaintance with him, to be stiff and unsociable; but this was owing to the want of greater intimacy. He was not, indeed, a man of many words, and was somewhat reserved among strangers, and those on whose candour and friendship he did not know he could rely. And this was probably owing to two things. First, the strict guard he set over his tongue from

his youth, which appears by his resolutions, taking great care never to use it in any way that might prove mischievous to any; never to *sin with his tongue*; nor to employ it in idle, trivial, and impertinent talk, which generally makes up a great part of the conversation of those who are full of words in all companies. He was sensible that, in the multitude of words, there wanteth not sin; and therefore refrained his lips, and habituated himself to *think* before he *spoke*, and to propose some good end even in all his words; which led him to be, above others, conformably to an apostolic precept, *slow to speak*. Secondly, this was in part the effect of his bodily constitution. He possessed but a comparatively small fund of animal life; his spirits were low, and he had not the strength of lungs that would be necessary in order to make him what might be called an affable, facetious gentleman, in all companies. They who have a great flow of animal spirits, and so can speak with more ease and less expence than others, may doubtless lawfully practise free conversation in all com-

panies for a lower end, e. g. to please, or to render themselves acceptable. But not so, he who has not such a stock; it becomes *him* to reserve what he has for higher and more important service. Besides, the want of animal spirits lays a man under a *natural* inability of exercising that freedom of conversation, at all times, and in whatever company he is, which those of more life naturally glide into; and the greatest degree of a sociable disposition, humility and benevolence, will not remove this obstacle.

He was not forward to enter into any dispute among strangers, and in companies where there might be persons of different sentiments; being sensible, that such disputes are generally unprofitable, and often sinful, and of bad consequence. He thought he could dispute to the best advantage with his pen; yet he was always free to give his sentiments on any subject proposed to him, and to remove any difficulties or objections offered by way of enquiry, as lying in the way of what he looked upon to be the truth. But how groundless the

imputation of *stiff* and *unsociable* was, his intimate and tried friends best knew. They always found him easy of access, kind and condescending; and though not talkative, yet affable and free. Among such whose candour and friendship he had experienced, he threw off reserve, and was most open and frank; quite patient of contradiction, while the utmost opposition was made to his sentiments, that could be by any plausible arguments or objections. And indeed, he was, on all occasions, quite sociable and free with all who had any special business with him.

In his family, he practised that conscientious exactness which was conspicuous in all his ways. He maintained a great esteem and regard for his amiable and excellent consort. Much of the tender and kind was expressed in his conversation with her, and conduct towards her. He was wont frequently to admit her into his study, and converse freely with her on matters of religion; and he used commonly to pray with her in his study, at least once a day, unless something extraordinary prevented.

The time for this, commonly, was just before going to bed, after prayer in the family. As he rose very early himself, he was wont to have his family up betimes in the morning; after which, before they entered on the business of the day, he attended on family prayer: when a chapter in the bible was read, commonly by candle-light in the winter; upon which he asked his children questions according to their age and capacity; and took occasion to explain some passages in it, or enforce any duty recommended, &c. as he thought most proper.

He was careful and thorough in the government of his children; and, as a consequence of this, they revered, esteemed, and loved him. He took special care to begin his government of them in good time. When they first discovered any considerable degree of self-will and stubbornness, he would attend to them till he had thoroughly subdued them and brought them to submit. Such prudent discipline, exercised with the greatest calmness, being repeated once or twice, was generally suf-

ficient for that child ; and effectually established his parental authority, and produced a cheerful obedience ever after.

He kept a watchful eye over his children, that he might admonish them of the *first* wrong step, and direct them in the right way. He took opportunities to converse with them in his study, singly and closely, about their souls' concerns ; and to give them warning, exhortation, and direction, as he saw need. He took much pains to instruct them in the principles of religion ; in which he made use of the *Assembly's Shorter Catechism* : not merely by taking care that they learned it by heart ; but by leading them into an understanding of the doctrines therein taught, by asking them questions on each answer, and explaining it to them. His usual time to attend to this was on the evening before the Sabbath. And, as he believed that the Sabbath, or holy time, began at sun-set the evening before the day, he ordered his family to finish all their secular business by that time, or before ; when all were called together, a psalm was sung, and prayer

offered, as an introduction to the sanctification of the Sabbath. This care and exactness effectually prevented that intruding on holy time, by attending to secular business, which is too common even in families where the evening before the Sabbath is pretended to be observed.

He was a great enemy to young people's unseasonable associating together for vain amusements, which he regarded as a dangerous step towards corrupting and bringing them to ruin. And he thought the excuse many parents make for tolerating their children in it, (viz. that it is the custom, and the children of others practise it, which renders it difficult, and even impossible to impose restraint,) was insufficient and frivolous; and manifested a great degree of stupidity, on supposition that the practice was hurtful and pernicious to their souls. And when his children grew up, he found no difficulty in restraining them from this mischievous custom; but they cheerfully complied with the will of their parents. He allowed none of his children to be from home after nine o'clock at night,

when they went abroad to see their friends and companions; neither were they permitted to sit up much after that time, in his own house, when any came to make them a visit. If any gentleman desired acquaintance with his daughters, after handsomely introducing himself, by properly consulting the parents, he was allowed all proper opportunity for it; but was not to intrude on the proper hours of rest and sleep, nor the religion and order of the family.

He had a strict and inviolable regard to justice in all his dealings with his neighbours, and was very careful to provide things honest in the sight of all men; so that scarcely a man had any dealings with him, that was not conscious of his uprightness. He appeared to have a sacred regard to truth in his words, both in promises and narrations, agreeably to his resolutions. This doubtless was one reason why he was not so full of words as many are. No man feared to rely on his veracity.

He was cautious in choosing his *intimate friends*, and therefore had not many that might properly be called such; but to them

he shewed himself friendly in a peculiar manner. He was indeed a faithful friend, and able above most others to keep a secret. To them he discovered himself more than to others, led them into his views and ends, and to the reasons of his conduct in particular instances : by which they had abundant evidence that he well understood human nature; and that his general reserve, and many particular instances of his deportment, which a stranger might impute to ignorance of men, were really owing to his uncommon knowledge of mankind.

His conversation with his friends was always highly profitable; in this he was remarkable, and almost singular. — He was not wont to spend his time with them in scandal, evil-speaking, and back-biting, or in foolish jesting, idle chat, and telling stories; but his mouth was that of the just, which bringeth forth wisdom, and whose lips dispense knowledge. His tongue was as the pen of a ready writer, while he conversed about important, heavenly, divine things, which his heart was so full of, in such a natural and free manner, as to be

most entertaining and instructive; so that none of his friends could enjoy his company without information and profit, unless it was by their own fault.

His great benevolence to mankind discovered itself, among other ways, by the uncommon regard he shewed to liberality, and charity, to the poor and distressed. He strongly recommended this, both in his public discourses and private conversation. He often declared it to be his opinion, that professed christians in these days are greatly deficient in this duty; and much more so than in most other parts of external christianity. He often observed how much this is spoken of, recommended, and encouraged in the holy scripture, especially in the New Testament. And it was his opinion, that every particular church ought, by frequent and liberal contributions, to maintain a public stock, that might be ready for the poor and necessitous members of that church: and that the principal business of deacons is to take care of the poor, in the faithful and judicious distribution and improvement of the church's

temporals, lodged in their hands. And he did not content himself with only recommending charity to others, but practised it much himself: though, according to his Master's advice, he took great care to conceal his acts of benevolence; by which means, doubtless, most of his alms-deeds will be unknown till the resurrection, but which, if known, would prove him to be as great an instance of charity as almost any that can be produced. This is not mere conjecture, but is evident many ways. He was forward to give on all public occasions of charity, though when it could properly be done, he always concealed the sum given. And some instances of his giving more, privately, have accidentally come to the knowledge of others, in which his liberality appeared in a very extraordinary degree. One of the instances was this: upon hearing that a poor obscure man, whom he never saw, or any of his kindred, was by an extraordinary bodily disorder brought to great straits; he, unasked, gave a considerable sum to a friend to be delivered to the distressed person; having first required a pro-

mise of him, that he would let neither the person who was the object of his bounty, nor any one else, know by whom it was bestowed. This may serve both as an instance of his extraordinary charity, and of his great care to conceal it.*

Mr. Edwards had the most universal character of a *good preacher* of almost any minister in America. There were but few that heard him, who did not call him a good preacher, however they might dislike his religious principles, and be much offended at the same truths when delivered by others; and most people admired him above all that ever they heard. His eminence as a preacher seems to have been owing to the following things:

First, The great pains he took in composing his sermons, especially in the first part of his life. As by his early rising, and constant attention to study, he had more time than most others, so he spent more

* As both the giver, and the object of his charity are dead, and all the ends of the proposed secrecy are answered, it is thought not inconsistent with the above-mentioned promise, to make known the fact, as it is here related.

time in making his sermons. He wrote most of them at full length, for nearly twenty years after he first began to preach; though he did not wholly confine himself to his paper in delivering them.

Secondly, His great acquaintance with divinity, and knowledge of the bible, His extensive information, and great clearness of thought, enabled him to discuss every subject with peculiar judgment and propriety, and to bring out of his treasure things new and old. Every topic he handled was instructive, plain, entertaining, and profitable; which was much owing to his being master of the subject, and his great skill in treating it in a natural, easy, and advantageous manner. None of his compositions were dry speculations, unmeaning harangues, or words without ideas. When he dwelt on those truths which are much controverted and opposed by many, which was often the case, he would set them in such a natural and easy light, and every sentiment, from step to step, would drop from his lips, attended with such clear and striking evidence, both from scripture and

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reason, as even to force the assent of every attentive hearer.

Thirdly, His excellency as a preacher was very much the effect of his great acquaintance with his own heart, his inward sense and high relish of divine truths, and experimental religion. This gave him a great insight into human nature : he well knew what was in man, both the saint and the sinner. This helped him to be skilful, to lay truth before the mind so as not only to convince the judgment, but also to touch the heart and conscience ; and enabled him to speak out of the abundance of his heart what he knew, and testify what he had seen and felt. This gave him a taste and discernment, without which he could not have been able to fill his sermons, as he did, with such striking, affecting sentiments, all suited to render solemn, to move, and to rectify the heart of the hearer. His sermons were well arranged, not usually long, and had commonly a large part taken up in the improvement ; which was closely connected with the subject, and consisted in sentiments naturally flowing from it.

But no description of his sermons will give the reader the idea of them which they had who sat under his preaching.

His appearance in the pulpit was with a good grace, and his delivery easy, natural, and very solemn. He had not a strong, loud voice; but appeared with such gravity and solemnity, and spoke with such distinctness, clearness, and precision; his words were so full of ideas, set in such a plain and striking light, that few speakers have been so able to command the attention of an audience. His words often discovered a great degree of inward fervour, without much noise or external emotion, and fell with great weight on the minds of his hearers. He made but little motion with his head or hands; but spoke so as to discover the motion of his own heart, which tended in the most natural and effectual manner to move and affect others. Though he carried his notes with him, and read most that he wrote, yet he was not confined to them; if some thoughts were suggested while he was speaking, which did not occur to him when writing, and appeared pertinent, he

would deliver them with as great propriety and fluency as any part he had written; and often with greater pathos, attended with a more sensibly good effect on his hearers.

But though, as observed, he was wont to read so considerable a part of what he delivered; yet he was far from thinking this the best way of preaching in general, and looked upon his using notes so much as he did, a defect and infirmity. And in the latter part of his life he was inclined to think it had been better, if he had never accustomed himself to use his notes at all. It appeared to him that preaching wholly without notes, agreeably to the custom in most Protestant countries, and which seems evidently to have been the manner of the apostles and primitive ministers of the gospel, was the most natural way; and had the greatest tendency, on the whole, to answer the end of preaching: and he supposed that any one who had talents equal to the work of the ministry, was capable of speaking *memoriter*, if he took suitable pains for this attainment from his youth.

He would have the young preacher write his sermons, at least most of them, out at large; and instead of reading them to his hearers, take pains to commit them to memory; which, though it would require a great deal of labour at first, yet would soon become easier by use, and help him to speak more correctly and freely, and be of great service to him all his days.*

* Were the writer of this note allowed to drop a hint on so delicate a subject, it would be this. Different preachers, like all other public speakers, are possessed of exceedingly different gifts; and therefore one plan, however excellent on the whole, cannot be adopted advantageously by all. In one, clearness of understanding and correctness of judgment are most prominent; in another, a lively and fertile imagination prevails; and a third excels in strength of memory. Some have a greater facility of expression at leisure, by the pen; and others experience more freedom when their senses and feelings are roused by their appearance in public. The man who excels in a sound judgment seldom possesses a lively imagination; he therefore should write the more, with a view to give animation to his compositions. He should secure in his notes pertinent quotations of scripture, apt comparisons, scripture allusions, and historic facts. The preacher, whose fancy is active and excursive, should labour to secure a well-digested plan, argumentatively just, and naturally connected. This will prevent his running into a wordy, declamatory strain. As to memory, there are two sorts, the verbal, and the scientific

His prayers were indeed *extempore*. He was the farthest from any appearance of a form, as to his words and manner of expression, of almost any man. He was quite singular in this, and inimitable by any who have not a spirit of real and undissembled devotion; yet he always expressed himself with decency and propriety. He appeared to have much of the grace and spirit of prayer; to pray with the spirit and with the understanding: and he performed this part of duty much to the acceptance and edification of those who joined with him. He was not wont, in ordinary cases, to be long in his prayers: an error which he observed was often hurtful to public and

or systematic. He who has the former, may soon preach *memoriter*;—after writing *all*, or without writing *any*. But let him ever watch, lest he enter into the temptation of plagiary; his quoting, however, long passages from the holy scriptures, when apposite, will be always acceptable; and occasionally, when avowed, the words of other authors. The scientific memory should guard against too much analysis in a sermon, and often choose for the subject of discussion historical passages, or any others which are best treated in the way of observation: which in time will effectually counteract the opposite tendency to explain what is clear, and to analyse without profit.—W.

social prayer, as it tends rather to damp than promote true devotion.

He kept himself quite free from worldly cares; but gave himself altogether to the work of the ministry, and entangled not himself with the affairs of this life. He left the particular oversight and direction of the temporal concerns of his family, almost entirely to Mrs. Edwards; who was better able than most of her sex to take the whole care of them on her hands. He was less acquainted with most of his temporal affairs than many of his neighbours, and seldom knew when, and by whom his forage for winter was gathered in, or how many milch kine he had, or whence his table was furnished, &c.

He did not make it his custom to visit his people in their own houses, unless he was sent for by the sick; or he heard that they were under some special affliction. Instead of visiting from house to house, he used to preach frequently at private meetings in particular neighbourhoods; and often call the young people and children to his own house, when he used to pray

with them, and treat with them in a manner suited to their years and circumstances ; and he catechised the children in public every Sabbath in the summer. He used sometimes to propose questions to particular young persons in writing, to be answered by them after a proper time given for preparation. In presenting these inquiries, he endeavoured to suit them to the age, genius, and abilities of those to whom they were addressed. His questions were generally such as required but a short reply ; and yet they could not be answered without a particular knowledge of some historical part of the scripture ; and therefore led, and even obliged persons to study the bible.

He did not neglect to visit his people from house to house because he did not look upon it, in ordinary cases, to be one part of the work of a gospel-minister ; but because he supposed that ministers should, with respect to this, consult their own talents and circumstances, and visit more or less, according to the degree in which they could hope thereby to promote the great ends of the ministry. He observed, that

some had a talent for entertaining and profiting by occasional visits among their people. They have words at will, and a readiness at introducing useful religious discourse in a free, natural, and, as it were, undesigned way. He supposed such had a call to spend a great deal of their time in visiting their people; but he looked on his own talents to be quite different. He was not able to enter into a free conversation with every person he met, and in an easy manner turn it to what topic he pleased, without the help of others, and, it may be, against their inclination. He therefore found that his visits of this kind must be in a great degree unprofitable. And as he was settled in a large* town, it would have taken up a great part of his time to visit from house to house, which he thought he could spend in his study to much more valuable purposes, and so better subserve

* Northampton might be considered as *large* for America, but in England would be called a *small* town, in point of population; since even so late as 1790, it did not exceed 1628 persons, according to a census then taken. But *all these* in a sense were his charge.—W.

the great design of his ministry. For it appeared to him, that he could do the greatest good to souls, and most promote the interest of Christ, by preaching and writing, and conversing with persons under religious impressions in his study; whither he encouraged all such to repair; where they might be sure, in ordinary cases, to find him, and to be allowed easy access to him; and where they were treated with all desirable tenderness, kindness, and familiarity.

In times, therefore, of the revival of religion among his people, his study was thronged with persons who came to lay open their spiritual concerns to him, and seek his advice and direction. These he received with great freedom and pleasure, and there he had the best opportunity to deal in the most particular manner with each one. He was a skilful guide to souls under spiritual difficulties; and was therefore applied to, not only by his own people, but by many who lived at a considerable distance. He became such, partly by his own experimental acquaintance with divine

things, and unwearied study of God's word, and partly by his having so much concern with souls under spiritual troubles; for he had not been settled in the work of the ministry many years before the Spirit of God was wonderfully poured out on his people, by which a great concern about their souls became almost universal, and a great number were hopefully the subjects of saving conversion. This was principally in the year 1734; a particular account of which has been written by him, entitled, *A faithful narrative of the surprising work of God, in the conversion of many hundred souls in Northampton*. This has been printed in England, Germany, and America; to which the reader must be referred.

There was another very remarkable time of the out-pouring of God's Holy Spirit in this part of America, in the years 1740 and 1741, and in which Northampton largely partook. Mr. Edwards, at this time, had to deal not only with his own people, but with multitudes of others. The report that the same things had been experienced at Northampton some years before,

and Mr. Edwards's fame for knowledge, piety, and great acquaintance with experimental religion, naturally led both ministers and people, from almost all parts of New England, to look to him, for direction and assistance, under these extraordinary circumstances. Being earnestly solicited to come and preach among them, he went to many; though he was not able to gratify all who desired him: and his preaching was attended with great success.

As many of the ministers and people in New England had been unacquainted with such things, they were greatly exposed to *run wild*, as it were, and (by the subtle temptations of the devil) actually did go into great extremes, both as opposers and friends to the work of God. Mr. Edwards was eminently useful by his direction and assistance in reference to the two opposite extremes, both in conversation, preaching, and writing. His publications on this occasion were of great and extensive service; especially a sermon preached at New-Haven, Sept. 10th, 1741, on *The distinguishing marks of a work of the Spirit of*

God,—his *Thoughts concerning the present revival of religion in New England*,—and his *Treatise on religious affections*. All which might be justly considered by the church of Christ as a wise and friendly voice behind them, saying. “This is the way, walk therein;” especially the last-mentioned Treatise, which is esteemed by many to be the best that has been written on the subject; setting the distinction between true and false religion in the most clear and striking light. And to the same purpose is *The Life of the Rev. David Brainerd, with reflections and observations*; published by Mr. Edwards in 1749.

Mr. Edwards was, what some would call, a rigid Calvinist. Those doctrines of Calvinism which have been most objected against, and given the greatest offence, appeared to him scriptural, reasonable, and important; and he thought that to abandon them, was, in effect, to abandon all. He therefore looked upon those who, calling themselves Calvinists, were for palliating the matter, that they might conform it more to the taste of those who are most disposed to object against it,

as really giving up and betraying the cause they pretended to espouse; and as paving the way not only to Arminianism, but to Deism. For if these doctrines, in the "whole length and breadth" of them, be relinquished, he did not see where an individual can rest, with consistency and safety, short of Deism, or even Atheism itself; or rather, universal Scepticism.— He judged that nothing was wanting but to have these doctrines *properly stated*, and *judiciously defended*, in order to their appearing most agreeable to reason and common sense, as well as doctrines of revelation; and that this therefore was the only effectual method to convince, or silence, and put to shame, the opposers of them. All will be able to satisfy themselves of the truth of this by reading his works, and especially his volumes on *The Freedom of the Will*, and *Original Sin*.

In this view of things, he thought it of importance that ministers should be very careful in examining candidates for the ministry, with respect to their *principles*, as well as their religious dispositions and

morals. And on this account he met with considerable difficulty and opposition, in some instances. His opinion was, that an erroneous, or unfaithful minister, was likely to do more injury than good to the church of Christ; and therefore he could not participate in the introduction of any one to the ministry, unless he appeared *sound in the faith*, and manifested, to the judgment of charity, a *disposition to be faithful*.

CHAP. IV.

His Departure from Northampton, with the Occasion and Circumstances of it.

WHATEVER belongs to man, or more correctly, whatever is properly his *own*, bears the mark of mutability. Mr. Edwards's labours at Northampton were crowned, at different periods of his ministry there, with signal success. But a root of bitterness sprung up, and many were defiled. The transactions contained in this chapter, though unpleasant, may afford, to a serious and reflecting mind, much instruction. If

that people were more depraved than christian churches in common, after enjoying for so long a period the stated instructions and prayers of so eminent a pastor; how great the depravity of human nature, to be capable of such ingratitude and such a reverse! Thus it was with Ephraim of old; "When I would," saith God, "have healed Israel, then the iniquity of Ephraim was discovered, and the wickedness, or the evils, of Samaria." But if the people in question were no more depraved than ourselves, let us learn caution, and beware of unreasonable and inordinate attachment to customs—let us contemplate with proper emotions the instability of all human affairs, and the folly and danger of trusting in man—let us reflect that we depend on God for the preservation of the closest friendships—and that the best ministers, without the continued supply of the Holy Spirit on the minds of their people, have no sure interest in their affections; people, to whom they have been most useful, and who have been long most attached to them.—Human nature has occasionally shewn itself in every age to be the

same. After the most extraordinary manifestation of divine power and goodness, "The whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness." And after the most awful and impressive instructions, the Lord had to say to Moses, "Go, get thee down; for thy people which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves."

For many years Mr. Edwards was very happy in the love and esteem of his people, and there was, during that period, the greatest prospect of his living and dying so. Indeed, he was almost the last minister in all New England that would have been thought likely to be opposed by his people. But the event proved how incompetent *we* are to decipher those consequences which depend on human volitions.—In the year 1744, about six years before the final rupture, Mr. Edwards was informed that some young persons in the town who were members of the church, had books in their possession which they employed to promote lascivious and obscene discourse among

their companions. Upon inquiry, a number of persons testified, that they had heard one and another, from time to time, talk obscenely; as what they were led to by reading a book or books, which they had among them. Mr. Edwards thought the brethren of the church ought to look into the matter; and in order to introduce it, he preached a sermon from Heb. xii. 15, 16. "Looking diligently, lest any man fail of the grace of God, lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birth-right." After sermon, he desired the brethren of the church to stay, and told them what information he had received; and inquired, whether they thought proper to take any measures to examine into the matter. They with one consent, and much zeal, stated it to be their opinion, that it ought to be inquired into; and proceeded to choose a number of individuals, to assist their pastor in investigating the affair. Upon which Mr. Edwards appointed the

time for their meeting at his house, and then read a list of the names of young persons, whom he desired to assemble at the same time. Some were the accused, and some witnesses; but it was not then declared of which number any particular individual was.

When the names were published, it appeared that there were but few of the considerable families in the town to which some of the persons mentioned did not belong, or were not nearly related. Whether this was the occasion of the alteration or not, before the day appointed came, a great number of heads of families changed their minds, and declared, that they did not think proper to proceed as they had done; that their children should not be called to an account in such a way, &c. The town was suddenly all in a blaze. This strengthened the hands of the accused; some refused to appear, and others who did appear behaved with a great degree of insolence, and contempt of the authority of the church. And little or nothing could be done further in the affair.

This was the occasion of weakening Mr. Edwards's hands in the work of the ministry, especially among the young people, with whom by this means he greatly lost his influence. This seemed in a great measure to put an end to his usefulness at Northampton; it doubtless laid a foundation for the surprising events which will be related, and will help to account for them. He certainly had no great visible success after this; the influences of God's Holy Spirit were greatly withheld, but security and carnality much increased among them.* That singular degree of visible religion and good order which had been among them soon began gradually to decay, and the youth have since been more wanton and dissolute.

Mr. Stoddard, Mr. Edwards's grand-father

* What an awful warning to all professors, and especially to young people! Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! Little do the giddy and the gay think how their levities operate, and what seeds of distress and sorrow they are sowing for themselves and others. Woe unto you that *thus* laugh now, for ye shall mourn and weep! How desirable it should be *penitentially* here, and not *despairingly* hereafter!—W.

and predecessor, was of the opinion, that unconverted persons, considered as such, had a right in the sight of God, or by his appointment, to the sacrament of the Lord's supper; that therefore it was their *duty* to come to that ordinance, though they knew they had no true goodness, or gospel holiness. He maintained, that visible christianity does not consist in a profession or appearance of that wherein true holiness or real christianity consists: that, therefore, the profession which persons make in order to be received as visible members of Christ's church, ought not to be such as to express or imply a real compliance with, or consent to the terms of the covenant of grace, or a hearty embracing of the gospel. So that they who really reject Jesus Christ, and dislike the gospel way of salvation in their hearts, and know that this is true of themselves, may make the profession without falsehood and hypocrisy.* He formed a

* That is, we apprehend, what they were required to *profess* was only *obligation* and *privilege*; or, that they were bound in duty to conform to the laws of Christ, and considered it their privilege to partake of his instituted ordi-

short profession for persons to make, in order to be admitted into the church, answerable to this principle; and accordingly persons were admitted into the church, and to the sacrament, on those terms. Mr. Stoddard's principle at first excited great attention in the country; and he was opposed as introducing something contrary to the principles and practice of almost all the churches in New England: and the

nances, as means appointed for their everlasting good; but not any actual *attainment* in religious experience. They were not encouraged as *converted* persons, but as those who professed the necessity of being saved in God's own way. In this case, persons would be asked, not whether they had actually experienced conversion to God, or could give some evidence whereby others might infer them to be so, but whether they considered themselves, as baptized persons, bound in duty to obey divine injunctions, and regarded an attendance on the ordinances of the gospel, a privilege which they wished to enjoy? Consequently, when they allowed that they apprehended themselves to be in an unconverted state, they could not fairly be chargeable with either falsehood or hypocrisy; for they professed nothing more than they believed respecting either their duty, their privilege, or their state.—It is, therefore, neither candid nor true to say, as some have done, that this principle of the church, inculcated by Mr. Stoddard, taught men that they “may be hypocrites without the guilt of hypocrisy, and liars without the imputation of sin.”—W.

matter was publicly controverted between him and Dr. Increase Mather, of Boston. However, through Mr. Stoddard's great influence over the people at Northampton, it was introduced there, though not without opposition; by degrees it spread very much among ministers and people in that county, and in other parts of New England. Mr. Edwards had some hesitation about this matter when he first settled at Northampton, but did not receive such a degree of conviction, as to prevent his adopting it with a good conscience, for some years. But at length his doubts increased, which put him upon examining it thoroughly, by searching the scripture, and reading such books as were written on the subject. The result was a full conviction that it was wrong, and that he could not retain the practice with a good conscience. He was fully convinced, that to be a *visible christian* was to put on the visibility or appearance of a real christian; that the profession of christianity was a profession of that wherein real christianity consists; and therefore, that no person who rejected

Christ in his heart, could make such a profession consistently with truth. And as the ordinance of the Lord's supper was instituted for none but *visible* professing christians, none but those who are *real* christians have a right in the sight of God to come to that ordinance: and consequently, that none ought to be admitted thereto, who do not make a profession of real christianity, and so be received in a judgment of charity as true friends to Jesus Christ.*

* They who have a desire more fully to understand this controversy, may do it by reading what Mr. Edwards wrote on the occasion, in order to explain and vindicate his principles; together with the Rev. Solomon Williams's answer, and Mr. Edwards's reply to him.

This important subject is so ably discussed by Dr. Williams, in a note appended to the last-mentioned publication, that the editor cannot refrain from inserting it.

"Much of this controversy, which was agitated with great warmth in the American churches, and which is not unfrequently started among congregational churches in Great Britain, seems to originate in the want of clearly stating the *scriptural design* of entering into full communion. If this be not previously settled, there is but little hope of a satisfactory adjustment. Without entering here into the *minutiae* of proofs, the following particulars are submitted to the reader's consideration, as probably calculated to aid his inquiries.

When Mr. Edwards's sentiments were known, (in the spring of the year 1744,) it

"1. The *chief* end of every human society, as well as of every intelligent being, ought to be this, viz. To glorify God, or to represent him as *glorious* in all his perfections and ways. No human society, of whatever kind, is exempt from this obligation. For a society is only an aggregate of individuals; and as every individual is obliged to do this in all his actions, he is therefore thus obliged in his *social* capacity. This obligation arises from the respective *natures* of God and the creature, and it is clearly enjoined in the holy scriptures. 'Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.'—But,

"2. The distinguishing *subordinate end* or special design of any society, must designate its *peculiar nature*, whereby it is best adapted to promote that end. Though every society is bound to seek the one chief end, yet every social union is not adapted to answer all social ends. Societies of a religious, moral, charitable, scientific, or political design, must have members of a corresponding character, otherwise the proposed end cannot be answered. The qualifications of the members must have an *aptitude* to promote the design.

"3. The distinguishing design of a society denominated a *church*, evidently is to *promote religion*. Numbers are united by divine appointment, to *maintain* religion—to exhibit before the world real Christianity—to *encourage* those who seek the right way—to edify one another—and the like. Such particulars we gather from the sacred scriptures. 'Striving together for the faith of the gospel.'—'That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God (resembling him) without rebuke (or, cause of rebuke) in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom

gave great offence, and the town was put into a great ferment; and before he was

ye shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life.'—A church of Christ is appointed to shine in a dark world, to be blameless and harmless among the crooked and perverse, to imitate God, as far as practicable, while among the children of the wicked one, to give no offence to those who are without or those who are within the church, to hold forth, and hold fast, the word of life, by doctrine, by discipline, and by practice. 'Him that is weak in the faith receive you, but not to doubtful disputations.' Provided a person be desirous of Christian Fellowship, and is possessed of so much knowledge, so much experienced efficacy of truth, and so much good conduct, as is calculated to answer, in a prevailing degree, the design of a church being at all formed, let him not be rejected. 'Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do?' This is done by mutual instructions, exhortations, prayers, and praises; by watchful discipline, and the exercise of religious gifts; by friendly offices, and acts of Christian kindness.

"4. The preceding particulars are produced only as instances; but in order accurately to ascertain the special end of Christian fellowship, in full communion, all the passages contained in the New Testament relating to the subject ought to be included. For until the revealed special design for which a church of Christ is instituted be ascertained, it is obviously not possible to ascertain the precise nature of the society, and consequently the qualifications of its members. However,

"5. We will suppose that, by an appeal to all the passages of the New Testament, the precise design is known; from whence the nature of a church is deduced: the ques-

heard in his own defence, or it was understood by many what his principles were, the

tion returns, Is there any *general rule* that may form an invariable standard by which all qualifications of candidates may be measured? There undoubtedly is, for this plain reason, because a church is a society instituted for *specific ends*, revealed in the New Testament. Now as these ends are matter of *divine record*, and not of human opinion, the *standard is invariable*.

"6. We will further suppose, that the *general rule*, by which to measure qualifications for full communion is, *The scriptural design for which a gospel church in full communion is divinely instituted*. No party, however they may differ about other things, can object to this rule, with any colour of reason. To deny its claim, they must either subvert the evident principles of all voluntary societies, or else hold, that a Christian church is not instituted in the New Testament for any specific end. But this no reasonable person, much less a serious Christian, will maintain. Hence,

"7. Those candidates for full communion, and only those, who are conformed to *this rule*, are fully qualified. But here it is of essential importance to observe, that though a *rule* is, and from its very nature must be, fixed and invariable, the qualifications of individuals are variable things, admitting of more or less conformity to it. The conjectures of men, however ingenious and plausible, cannot be admitted as a *rule*, because they are *variable*; but the rule must be deduced from the *design* itself of instituting a church, which is evidently a matter of pure divine pleasure, and which could not be known without a revelation from God. A *rule*, then, must be sought from the sacred oracles by an induction of particulars relating to the

general cry was to have him dismissed, as what alone would satisfy them. This was

point in question, and from their harmonious agreement; and it is the business of every Christian church, minister and member, to search the scriptures in order to ascertain it. To contend about *qualifications*, before this is agreed upon, is to contend about the dimensions of different things, before a standard is fixed upon by which to measure them. But the constituent parts of the qualifications in candidates, cannot be found in scripture; they must, most evidently, be sought in the *characters* of the individuals, which are indefinitely variable. To suppose that the character, or the *actual attainment* of each candidate, is revealed in scripture, is too absurd to be maintained by any rational mind. Therefore,

“8. What remains for a church to do in judging of qualifications, is to *compare the proficiency* of the candidate with the scriptural rule. The former, admitting of indefinite degrees of approximation to the standard, must be learnt from the person himself, from his conduct, and from the testimony of others. His profession, his declared experience of divine truth, his deportment in society, in short, his general character, is to be viewed, in comparison with the evident design of God in forming a church.

“9. Should it be objected, that different persons; or churches, might fix on a different standard, by *adding more* texts of scripture out of which a various general result would arise; it is answered, that therefore this is the point to be first settled. When any disagree about the rule, they cannot of course agree about the qualifications. There are many texts, however, such as those above produced, concerning which there can be no disagreement. The rule therefore should be admitted, *as far as it goes*. A

evident from the whole tenor of their conduct, as they neglected and opposed the

measure of a foot long may, as far as it goes, be a standard of straightness and of measure, as well as a yard or a fathom. Or, to change the comparison, a small measure of capacity may be equally accurate, to a certain degree, as a larger measure. Let the church of small attainments act charitably, and wait for brighter evidence. If any lack wisdom, let them ask of God, who giveth liberally. 'Let us, therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded; and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. Nevertheless, *whereto we have already attained*, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.'

"10. The scriptural rule is not only invariable, but also perfect in its kind, as dictated by infinite wisdom for the noblest ends. But no human character, in the present state, is perfect, so as to comport universally with the standard. Therefore no candidate for communion is perfectly qualified; that is, his qualifications are only comparative. One may be qualified in a greater, and another in a smaller degree. One is qualified to fill his place eminently, another moderately well. One may be strong, and another weak in the faith. Yet he who is weak in the faith may be comparatively qualified. Therefore,

"11. Since qualifications are so various, and admit of indefinite approximations to the perfect standard, or deviations from it, we are bound to accede to another conclusion, viz. That whatever kind or degree of qualification appears to *befriend*, rather than to oppose, to *honour*, rather than to discredit the scriptural design of full communion, ought to be admitted by the church. When a candidate for communion is proposed to a church, its

most proper means of calmly considering, and so understanding the matter in dispute,

immediate business is to consult the scriptural design of communion; and then to consider how far the qualifications of the candidate appear to befriend and to honour it.

" 12. From the premises, it follows, that to reason from qualifications for communion in the Jewish church, to those for full communion in a gospel church, must needs be uncertain and inconclusive; except it could be first proved, that the revealed design of each was the same. But it requires no great labour to shew, by an induction of particulars, that the design was very different; and consequently, that what would be a suitable qualification for the one, would not be so for the other.

" 13. We may further infer, that when a church requires a probable evidence of grace as the measuring rule of admission, and directs nearly all its attention to ascertain this point, its proceedings are irregular, unscriptural; and therefore unwarrantable. The rule of judging, as before shewn, must be found in the scripture, and not in the candidate.

" 14. We may further infer from the preceding observations, that a *probable evidence of grace* in a candidate, is not the *precise ground* of the qualification, however *desirable* that evidence may be. Yet, because ordinarily, and most probably, the absence of saving grace implies the absence of the precise ground of answerableness to the scriptural design of full communion, such probable evidence is of great importance. However nice this distinction may appear to some, the want of attending to it seems to have constituted the chief difference between our author and his antagonists. And, in fair investigation,

and persisted in a refusal to attend to what Mr. Edwards had to say in defence of his

another question, different from what was agitated, ought to have been first settled, viz. Whether *any person*, who is not visibly the subject of saving grace, can 'befriend, rather than oppose, can *honour*, rather than discredit the scriptural design of full communion?' Fairly to answer this question in the negative, it is not enough to prove, that such a person cannot *fully answer* the scriptural design. But it ought to be proved, that no person destitute of such probable evidence of saving grace, in any circumstances whatever, can be found, who might befriend and honour the scriptural design of communion, rather than the contrary. This is the real hinge of the controversy.

" 15. It is an unscriptural notion, too much taken upon trust, that the immediate business of a church, is to form an opinion respecting the spiritual state of a person before God; as, whether he is the subject of saving grace—whether he has a principle of sincerity—whether his motives are spiritually pure, &c. Whereas, a church ought not to act the part of a jury on the candidate's real state towards God, but on his state towards the church. They are to determine, whether he is, or is not *eligible* to answer the scriptural ends of such a society, and indeed of that particular church. For, as the circumstances of divers churches may be very different, there may be cases, where the same person may be eligible to one church, and not to another. In one church he may *promote* its welfare, in another *hinder* it. This may greatly depend on his peculiar tenets, and the zeal with which he may be disposed to maintain them. In one society he may be a

principles. From beginning to end, they opposed the measures which had the best

source of disquiet and confusion, but in another the reverse.

“ 16. Hence it is evident, that a visibility of saving grace, though it claims the Christian love and respect of the church, does not, in all cases, constitute eligible qualifications. For, whatever has an evident tendency to produce disputes, animosities, and divisions in a church, ought to be kept out of it. But the admission of a person, who appeared zealous for sentiments and customs opposite to those held by the church, would have this apparent tendency, notwithstanding his possessing a visibility of grace, on other accounts. Therefore, though a visibility of grace, in some cases, may be sufficiently plain, yet an apparent failure in other respects may be sufficient to shew that a person is not qualified for full communion. In short, if the church have good reason to think, that his admission would do more harm than good, he should be deemed *unqualified* for membership in that society, though he may be entitled to a charitable opinion, or even Christian love, on other accounts: and, on the contrary, if the church have good reason to think, that his admission would do more good than harm, he should be deemed *qualified* for membership—even though he may be less entitled to a charitable opinion of his state towards God, than the other.

“ COROLLARIES.

“ 1. Any candidate who appears, in the charitable judgment of a Christian church, likely to give a favourable representation of Christianity to the church and the world—to encourage the desirous, by his knowledge and tempera-

tendency to compromise and heal the difficulty; and with much zeal pursued those

—and to give and receive Christian edification in that communion—is, in the scripture sense, *qualified* for full communion.

“ 2. Personal religion, in the sight of God, is to be deemed necessary only *for the sake* of enabling the candidate to answer such ends,—as far as *membership* is concerned; but, as final salvation is concerned, personal religion is indispensably necessary, this connection being clearly revealed, as well as founded in the nature of things.

“ 3. A Christian minister may consistently exercise holy jealousy over some church members, and warn them of the danger of hypocrisy, without threatening them with exclusion from their membership; because only their *overt-acts* (including sentiments, tempers, and conduct) are the object of discipline, as they were of admission.

“ 4. Some persons, though in a safe state towards God, may not answer the forementioned ends of membership, better than others who are not in such a state.

“ 5. A person may be qualified for the society of heaven, while not qualified for full communion in a Christian church; because the natures of the two societies are different, and consequently the scriptural ends of their admission into each. For infants or idiots, &c. may be qualified by grace for the society of heaven; but are totally unqualified for full communion in the church on earth.

“ 6. Were Christian churches to act always on these principles, much bitter strife and useless discussions would be avoided, in the admission and exclusion of members. For, in neither the one nor the other would the church pronounce on the state of the persons towards God; for when any were *admitted*, no handle would be afforded to

which were calculated to make a separation certain and speedy. Mr. Edwards thought of preaching on the subject, that they might know what were his sentiments, and the grounds of them, (of both which he was sensible that most of them were quite ignorant,) before they took any step towards a separation. But that he might do nothing to increase the tumult, he first proposed it to the church's standing committee; supposing that if he entered on the subject publicly with their consent, it would prevent the ill consequences which otherwise he feared would follow. But most of them strenuously opposed it. Upon which he abstained from it for the present, as what in such circumstances would rather blow up the fire to a greater height, than answer the good ends proposed.

the presumption, that membership below is a qualification for heaven—and when any were excluded, no occasion would be given to the excommunicated person, or to the world, to pass the censure of uncharitableness on the church; for every voluntary society has a right to judge, according to its own appropriate rules, who is, and who is not qualified to promote its welfare.”—W.—*Edwards's Works*, vol. vii. p. 339—342.

Mr. Edwards was sensible that his principles were not understood, but misrepresented through the country; and finding that his people were then too warm calmly to attend to the matter in controversy, he proposed to print what he had to offer on the point; as this seemed to be the only way left him to have a fair hearing. Accordingly his people consented to put off calling a council, till what he should write was published. But they manifested great uneasiness in waiting, before it came out of the press; and when it was published, it was read but by very few of them. Mr. Edwards being sensible of this, renewed his proposal to preach upon it, and at a meeting of the brethren of the church asked their consent in the following terms: "I desire that the brethren would manifest their consent, that I should declare the reasons of my opinion relating to full communion in the church, in lectures appointed for that end; not as an act of authority, or as putting the power of declaring the whole counsel of God out of my hands; but for peace' sake, and to prevent occasion of

strife." This was answered in the negative. He then proposed that it should be put to a few of the neighbouring ministers, whether it was not, all things considered, reasonable that he should be heard in this matter from the pulpit, before the affair should be brought to an issue. But this also passed in the negative.

However, having had the advice of the ministers and messengers of the neighbouring churches, who met at Northampton to advise them under their difficulties, he proceeded to appoint a lecture, in order to preach on the subject, proposing to do so weekly till he had finished what he had to say. On Monday there was a society meeting, in which a vote was passed to choose a committee to go to Mr. Edwards, and desire him not to preach lectures on the subject in controversy, according to his declaration and appointment: in consequence, a committee of three, chosen for this purpose, waited on him. However, Mr. Edwards thought proper to proceed agreeably to his proposal, and accordingly preached a number of sermons, till he

had finished what he had to state on the subject. These lectures were very thinly attended by his own people; but great numbers of strangers from the neighbouring towns attended them, so many as to make above half the congregation. This was in February and March, 1750.

The calling of a decisive council to determine the matter of difference was now more particularly attended to on both sides. Mr. Edwards had before this insisted, from time to time, that they were by no means ripe for such a procedure; as they had not yet given him a fair hearing, whereby perhaps the need of such a council would be superseded. He observed, "That it was exceedingly unbecoming to manage religious affairs of the greatest importance in a ferment and tumult, which ought to be managed with great solemnity, deep humiliation, submission to the awful frowns of heaven, humble dependence on God, with fervent prayer and supplication to him: That therefore for them to go about such an affair as they did, would be greatly to the dishonour of God and religion: a

way in which a people cannot expect a blessing." Thus having used all means to bring them to a calm and charitable temper without effect, he consented that a decisive council should be called without any further delay.

But a difficulty attended the choice of a council, which was for some time insuperable. It was agreed, that the members should be mutually elected, one half by the pastor, and the other half by the church: but the people insisted upon it, that Mr. Edwards should be confined to the county in his choice. He thought this an unreasonable restraint upon him, as it was known that the ministers and churches in that county almost universally differed from him in the controversy. He indeed did not suppose that the business of the proposed council would be to determine whether his opinion was right or not; but whether any possible way could be devised for an accommodation between pastor and people, and to use their wisdom and endeavours in order to effect it; and if they found this impracticable, to declare, whether what

ought in justice to be done had already actually been attempted, so that there was nothing further to be demanded by either of the parties concerned, before a separation should take place. And if he was dismissed, it would be incumbent upon them to state publicly in what manner and for what cause he was dismissed: all which were matters of great importance to him, and required upright and impartial judges. Now considering the great influence a difference in religious opinions has on prejudice, and the close connection of the point in which most of the ministers and churches in the county differed from him, with the matter to be decided, he did not think they could be reasonably looked upon as judges so impartial, that the matter ought to be wholly left to them. Besides, he thought the case, being so new and extraordinary, required the ablest judges in the land. For these reasons, and some others which he offered, he insisted upon liberty to go out of the county, for those members of the proposed council in which he was to have a choice. The people strenuously and obsti-

nately opposing him in this, they at length agreed to leave the matter to an assembly, consisting of the *ministers and messengers* of the five neighbouring churches; who, after they had met twice upon it, and heard the case largely debated before them, were *equally divided*, and therefore left the matter undetermined.

However, they were all agreed, that Mr. Edwards ought to have liberty to go out of the county for *some* of the council. And at the next church meeting, (on the 26th of March,) Mr. Edwards offered to unite with them, if they would consent that he should choose *two* of the churches out of the county, in case the council consisted of but *ten* churches. The church, however, at several successive meetings refused to comply with this; and proceeded to call a church meeting and choose a moderator, in order to act without their pastor.—But, to pass by many particulars, at length, at a meeting of the church, convened by their pastor, May 3d, they voted their consent to his proposal of going out of the county for two of the

churches that should be applied to. They then proceeded to make choice of the ten ministers and churches, of which the assembly should consist. Accordingly the churches were applied to, and the council was convened on the 19th of June. After they had made some fruitless attempts at an agreement between the pastor and the church, they passed a resolution, by a majority of one voice* only, to the following purpose: "That it is expedient that the pastoral relation between Mr. Edwards and his church be immediately dissolved, if the people still persist in desiring it." And it being publicly put to the people, whether they still insisted on Mr. Edwards's dismission from the pastoral office over them, a great majority (above two hundred, against

* One of the churches which Mr. Edwards chose did not see fit to join the council. However, the minister of that church being at Northampton, was desired by Mr. Edwards and the church, to sit in council and act, which he did. But there being no messenger from the church, the council was not full, and there was a disparity; by which means there was one vote more for an immediate dismission than against it.

twenty) voted in the affirmative: and he was accordingly dismissed, June 22, 1750.

The dissenting part of the council entered their protest against this proceeding, judging that it was too hasty, considering the past conduct and present temper of the people. And some of that part of the council who were for the separation, expressed themselves surprised at the uncommon zeal manifested by the people in their voting for a dismission; which evinced to them, and all observing spectators, that they were far from a temper of mind becoming such a solemn and awful transaction, regarded in all its circumstances.

Being thus dismissed, Mr. Edwards preached his farewell sermon on the 1st of July, from 2 Cor. i. 14. *As also ye have acknowledged us in part, that we are your rejoicing, even as ye also are ours, in the day of the Lord Jesus.* The doctrine he observed from the words was this: "Ministers, and the people that have been under their care, must meet one another before Christ's tribunal, at the day of judgment." It was a remarkably

solemn and affecting discourse, and was published at the desire of some of the hearers.—After Mr. Edwards was dismissed, he preached at Northampton occasionally, when there was no other preacher to supply the pulpit; till at length a great uneasiness was manifested by many of the people, at his preaching there at all. Upon which, the committee for supplying the pulpit, called the town together, to know their minds with respect to that matter; when they voted, that it was not agreeable that he should preach among them. Accordingly, while Mr. Edwards was in the town, and they had no other minister to preach to them, they carried on public worship among themselves, and without any preaching, rather than invite him.

Every one must be sensible that this was a great trial to Mr. Edwards. He had been nearly twenty-four years among that people; and his labours had been, to all appearance, from time to time greatly blessed among them: and a great number looked on him as their spiritual father, who had been the happy instrument of turning them from

darkness to light, and plucking them as brands out of the burning. They had repeatedly professed that they looked upon it as one of their greatest privileges to have such a minister, and manifested their great love and esteem for him, to such a degree, that, (as St. Paul says of the Galatians,) "if it had been possible, they would have plucked out their own eyes and given them to him." They had a great interest in *his* affection: he had borne them on his heart, and carried them in his bosom for many years; exercising a tender concern and love for them; for their benefit he was always writing, contriving, labouring; for them he had poured out ten thousand fervent prayers; in their good he had rejoiced as one that findeth great spoil; and they were dear to him above any other people under heaven.—Now to have *this people* turn against him, and force him out from among them, stopping their ears, and running upon him with furious zeal, not allowing him to defend himself by giving him a fair hearing, and even refusing so much as to hear him preach; many of them sur-

rising, and publicly speaking, many evil things as to his ends and designs—surely this must have deeply affected him, and strongly tried his spirit. The words of the psalmist seem applicable to this case: “It was not an enemy that reproached me, then I could have borne it; neither was it he that hated me, that did magnify himself against me, then I would have hid myself from him. But it was THOU—my guide, and mine acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company.”

Let us therefore now *behold the man!*—The calm sedateness of his mind; his meekness and humility, under great and violent opposition, and injurious treatment; his resolution and steady conduct through all this dark and terrible storm, were truly wonderful, and cannot be set in so beautiful and affecting a light, by any description, as they appeared in to his friends, who were eye-witnesses.

Mr. Edwards had a numerous and expensive family, and little or no income, exclusive of his salary: and, considering

how far he was advanced in years; the general disposition of people who want a minister to prefer a young man who has never been settled, to one who has been dismissed from his people; and what misrepresentations were made of his principles through the country; it appeared to him not at all probable, that he should ever have opportunity to be settled again in the work of the ministry, if he was dismissed from Northampton: and he was not inclined, or able to take any other course, or go into any other business to obtain a livelihood; so that beggary, as well as disgrace, stared him full in the face, if he adhered to his principles. When he was fixed in his principles, and before they were publicly known, he told some of his friends, that if he discovered and persisted in them, it would most likely issue in his dismissal and disgrace; and the ruin of himself and family, as to their *temporal* interests. He therefore first sat down and counted the cost, and deliberately took up the cross, when it was set before him in its full weight and magnitude; and in direct

opposition to all *worldly* views and motives. This conduct in these circumstances, was, therefore, a remarkable exercise and discovery of his conscientiousness; and his readiness to deny himself, and forsake all that he had, to follow Christ.—A man must have a considerable degree of the spirit of a martyr, to go on with the steadfastness and resolution with which he did. He ventured wherever truth and duty appeared to lead him, unmoved at the threatening dangers on every side.

However, God did not forsake him. As he gave him those inward supports by which he was able in patience to possess his soul, and courageously row on in the storm, in the face of boisterous winds beating hard upon him, and in the midst of opening waves threatening to swallow him up; so he soon appeared for him in his providence, even beyond all his expectations. His correspondents, and other friends in Scotland, hearing of his dismissal, and fearing it might be the means of bringing him into worldly straits, generously contributed a considerable sum, and sent it over to

him.—And God did not leave him without tender valuable friends at Northampton. For a small number of his people who had opposed his dismissal from the beginning, and some who had acted on neither side, but after his dismissal adhered to him, under the influence of their great esteem and love for Mr. Edwards, were willing and thought themselves able to maintain him: and insisted upon it that it was his duty to stay among them, as a distinct and separate congregation from the body of the town, who had rejected him.

Mr. Edwards could not see it to be his duty to continue at Northampton, as this would probably have been a means of perpetuating an unhappy division in the town; and there appeared to him no prospect of doing the good there, which would counterbalance the evil. However, that he might do all in his power to satisfy his tender and afflicted friends, he consented to ask the advice of an ecclesiastical council. Accordingly, a council was called, and met at Northampton on the 15th of May, 1751.—The town on this occasion was thrown into a great

tumult. They who were active in Mr. Edwards's dismissal supposed, though without any good reason, that he was contriving with his friends again to introduce himself. They drew up a remonstrance against their proceedings, and laid it before the council, (though they would not acknowledge them to be an ecclesiastical council,) containing many heavy, though groundless insinuations and charges against Mr. Edwards, and bitter accusations of the party who had adhered to him: but refused to appear and support any of their charges, or so much as to give the gentlemen of the council any opportunity to confer with them about the affair depending, though it was diligently sought.—The council having heard what Mr. Edwards and they who adhered to him had to say, advised, agreeably to Mr. Edwards's judgment, that he should leave Northampton, and accept of the mission to which he was invited at Stockbridge; of which a more particular account will be given.

Many additional facts relative to this sorrowful and surprising affair (the most so,

doubtless, of any of the kind that ever happened in New England; and perhaps in any part of the christian world) might be related; but as this more general history of it may be sufficient to answer the ends proposed, viz. to rectify some gross misrepresentations that have been made of the matter,* and to

* From all that we have been able to collect, respecting this very singular affair, we are disposed to infer, that the *precise causes* of the difference, and consequent separation, between Mr. Edwards and his people at Northampton, are not sufficiently attended to, or duly appreciated. That Mr. Edwards was very ill used no one can question; but if that usage proceeded from "the passionate ignorance of the brutish multitude," from a principle "becoming the disciples of Ignatius of Loyola," a principle "which no church of Christ ever avowed;" if it proceeded from "such a kind of men as the idolaters at Ephesus," men who were determined that "the business was to be hellowed down with the force of lungs," in opposition to the voice of meekness and wisdom, reason and revelation—men who "meditated the ruin of their pastor by designs of confusion," men "whose rebellion added stubbornness to their iniquity," men who "agreed with lies and contumelies to promote this mean and unjust design, in the true spirit of injustice and meanness"—if the pastor of these men was treated by them with "wayward ignorance, cunning intrigues, and insolent clamours;"—in short, if these people may be fairly called an "ungodly party," and a "licentious mob," composing an ecclesiastical body of above two hundred against twenty,—a dispassionate en-

discover the great trial Mr. Edwards had herein, it is thought best to omit other

quircr will be solicitous to reconcile all this with the universally acknowledged great awakenings, convictions of sin, conversions to God, and the most unequivocal effects of genuine religion among numbers of them, according to Mr. Edwards's own account of the matter; and he was far from drawing hasty conclusions about the genuineness of religion. Towards solution of this difficulty, we beg leave to propose a few remarks.

1. In reference to Mr. Edwards himself.—And if we mistake not, though eminently devoted to God; and a lover of holiness, this great man was not perfectly accurate in some particulars.

1. He seems to have presumed too much on his influence over all the inhabitants of the town in an affair of the utmost delicacy. And may we not add, that his recluse mode of living among them (pastoral visits not being included in his ministerial plan) contributed not a little to lessen his influence? Whether he did right in that particular, and whether the people made sufficient allowance for his motives, are other questions.

2. The manner in which the budbings of iniquity, among several of the young branches of the people, were counteracted, manifested more of a steady abhorrence of the thing evil, than of prudence in managing human passions. To read the list of names in the manner stated, was calculated, perhaps, to excite a ferment, circumstanced as the people were, without supposing them much worse than other societies.

3. It does not appear that proper means were sufficiently employed to counteract a rising spirit of opposition, viz.

particulars. As a proper close to this melancholy story, and to confirm and illus-

private; friendly calls and expostulations with parents, previous to a more open and general investigation.

4. The time for discussing the question of right to the Lord's supper, was peculiarly unfavourable to amicable agreement, in addition to other causes of difference in sentiment on that point.

5. In reference to the people. No one, probably, will attempt to justify their conduct; and we hope that most of them, if not all, had a more just sense of the matter, when the heat of controversy had abated; a pleasing specimen of which we shall insert. However, we think there were some circumstances, which, if duly considered, though they did not exculpate them, yet will shew their conduct in a far less aggravated light than that in which some have been pleased to represent it. To mention these is but the part of candour.

1. It does not appear that the parents of the young persons defended them, or gave them maintenance, in the alleged improprieties of their practices. The fairer inference is, that they objected only to the manner in which they were to be called to an account, and the right of Mr. Edwards to exercise official authority in such cases.

2. As to their views of the ordinance of the Lord's supper, it was by no means a new peculiarity of theirs; it was a long established custom among them. And this also was maintained by many churches and able ministers around them.

3. The true state of the question about a right to communion, has not, we think, been candidly stated, by those who have indulged acrimony in their censures. What is

trate what has been related, the following letter from Joseph Hawley, esq. (a

was asserted that "unconverted persons, known to be such, have a right in the sight of God to the sacrament of the Lord's supper," candour will not infer that this is teaching "lying and hypocrisy."—The true question is, What is the design of this ordinance? Is it a *converting* ordinance? Is the privilege of participation similar to that of attending a preached gospel? Or, on the other hand, was it instituted for the use of *professed believers*? In a strict sense of these words Mr. Edwards maintained, and we think very justly maintained, the latter sentiment; but his people, as long taught by a divine of no small celebrity, his own grand-father, and the ancestor of many other persons of considerable influence in the town, believed the former.

Now, supposing the ordinance to be designed by the institutor merely as a *moral mean*, not only of edification to *professed believers*, but also of *conversion* to baptized nominal christians; was not a plan which deprived their offspring of this privilege, likely to rouse their feelings to the utmost, should any to plead that our children were no longer admitted to sit under a preached gospel? A false principle, therefore, betrayed them into warmth and obstinacy of opposition, rather than a deliberate love of him, or a total want of respect to their minister. They erroneously thought that baptism and the Lord's supper had the same design; and therefore, that those who did not renounce the one had a right to the other: not considering, that the former is a bond of *general relation* to the church and Christ, and the latter a bond of *particular communion* with Christ and his professing members.

gentleman who was very active in the transactions of this whole business, and very much a leader in it,) to the Rev. Mr. Hall, of Sutton, published in a weekly

4. That the people should be considered as more under the influence of a mistaken principle, imbibed from their infancy, (and not opposed by Mr. Edwards himself for about twenty years,) than filled with ingratitude and the love of sin, appears probable from his not disavowing any wish to leave them. His great anxiety appears to have been, to convince them of their error in principle; but not to leave them as "an abandoned set." More urbanity of manners, and the cultivation of christian meekness, would have taught them to maintain their principle in a different way; and a greater superiority of mind, in examining long established customs by the light of revelation and just reasoning, would have taught them to renounce the very principle by which they were betrayed. But while that principle was not renounced, there was as little prospect of accommodation almost as between a Perdobaptist minister and an Antipdobaptist church, that rejected the principle of mixed communion, however excellent in other respects the character may be on both sides.—And is it not highly probable, that this was the light in which the majority of the convened council viewed the matter? They attempted a reconciliation—not between an excellent minister and "an abandoned set" advocating the cause of immorality, but—between a valued man, minister, and writer, and a people who, though greatly benefited by his other labours, were not convinced by his reasoning in reference to an institute of religion.—W.

newspaper in Boston, May 19th, 1760, is here inserted.

“REV. SIR, “*Northampton, May 9, 1760.*

“I have often wished that every member of the two ecclesiastical councils that formerly sat in Northampton, upon the unhappy differences between our former most worthy and reverend pastor, Mr. Jonathan Edwards, and the church here, whereof you were a member; I say, sir, I have often wished every one of them truly knew my real sense of my own conduct in the affairs that the one and the other of the said councils are privy to. As I have long apprehended it to be my duty not only to humble myself before God for what was unchristian and sinful in my conduct before the said councils, but also to confess my faults to them, and take shame to myself before them; so I have often studied with myself in what manner it was practicable for me to do it. When I understood that you, sir, and Mr. Eaton were to be at Cold-Spring at the time of the late council, I resolved to improve the opportunity fully

to open my mind there to you and him thereon; and thought that probably some method might be then thought of in which my reflections on myself touching the matters above hinted at, might be communicated to most, if not all the gentlemen aforesaid, who did not reside in this county. But you know, sir, how difficult it was for us to converse together by ourselves, when at Cold-Spring, without giving umbrage to that people; I therefore proposed writing to you upon the matters which I had then opportunity only most summarily to suggest; which you, sir, signified would be agreeable to you. I therefore now undertake what I then proposed, in which I humbly ask the divine aid; and that I may be made most freely willing fully to confess my sin and guilt to you and the world in those instances which I have reason to suppose fell under your notice, as they were public and notorious transactions, and on account whereof, therefore, you, sir, and all others who had knowledge thereof, had just cause to be offended at me.

And, in the first place, sir, I apprehend that with the church and people of Northampton, I sinned and erred exceedingly in consenting and labouring, that there should be so early a dismissal of Mr. Edwards from his pastoral relation to us, even upon the supposition that he was really in a mistake in the disputed point: not only because the dispute was upon matters so very disputable in themselves, and at the greatest remove from fundamental, but because Mr. Edwards so long had approved himself a most faithful and painful pastor to the said church. He also changed his sentiments in that point wholly from a tender regard to what appeared to him to be truth; and had made known his sentiments with great moderation, and upon great deliberation, against all worldly motives, from mere fidelity to his great Master, and a tender regard to the souls of his flock, as we had the highest reason to judge. These considerations now seem to me sufficient; and would (if we had been of a right spirit) have greatly endeared him to his people; and made us to the last degree reluctant to

part with him, and disposed us to the exercise of the greatest candour, gentleness, and moderation. How much of the reverse whereof appeared in us, I need not tell you, sir, who were an eye-witness of our temper and conduct.

“ And although it does not become me to pronounce decisively on a point so disputable as what was then in dispute; yet I beg leave to say, that I really apprehend that it is of the highest moment to the body of this church, and to me in particular, most solicitously to enquire, whether like the pharisees and lawyers in John the Baptist's time, we did not reject the counsel of God against ourselves, in rejecting Mr. Edwards, and his doctrine, which was the ground of his dismission. And I humbly conceive that it highly imports us all of this church, most seriously and impartially to examine what that most worthy and able divine published, about that time, in support of the same, whereby he being dead yet speaketh. But there were three things, sir, especially in my own particular conduct before the first council, which have

been justly matter of great grief and much trouble to me almost ever since, viz.

“ In the first place, I confess, sir, that I acted very immodestly and abusively to you, as well as injuriously to the church and myself, when with much zeal and unbecoming assurance, I moved the council that they would interpose to silence and stop you in an address you were making one morning to the people, wherein you were, if I do not forget, briefly exhorting them to a tender remembrance of the former affection and harmony that had long subsisted between them and their reverend pastor, and the great comfort and profit which they apprehended that they had received from his ministry; for which, sir, I heartily ask your forgiveness; and I think, that we ought, instead of opposing an exhortation of that nature, to have received it with all thankfulness.

“ Another particular of my conduct before that council, which I now apprehend was criminal, and was owing to the want of that tender affection and reverend respect and esteem for Mr. Edwards which he had

highly merited of me, was my strenuously opposing the adjournment of the matters submitted to that council, for about two months; for which I declare myself unfeignedly sorry; and I with shame remember, that I did it in a peremptory, decisive, vehement, and very immodest manner.

“ But, sir, the most criminal part of my conduct at that time, that I am conscious of, was my exhibiting to that council a set of arguments in writing, the drift whereof was to prove the reasonableness and necessity of Mr. Edwards's dismission, in case no accommodation was then effected with mutual consent; which writing, by clear implication, contained some severe, uncharitable, and, if I remember right, groundless and slanderous imputations on Mr. Edwards, expressed in bitter language. And although the original draft thereof was not done by me, yet I foolishly and sinfully consented to copy it; and, as agent for the church, to read it, and deliver it to the council; which I could never have done, if I had not a wicked relish for perverse things: which conduct of mine I confess was very sinful,

and highly provoking to God; for which I am ashamed, confounded, and have nothing to answer.

"As to the church's remonstrance, as it was called, which their committee preferred to the last of the said councils, (to all which I was consenting, and in the composing whereof, I was very active, as 'also' in bringing the church to their vote upon it;) I would, in the first place, only observe, that I do not remember any thing, in that small part of it which was plainly expressive of the expediency of Mr. Edwards's re-settlement here as pastor to a part of the church, which was very exceptionable. But as to all the residue, which was much the greatest part thereof, (and I am not certain that any part was wholly free,) it was every where interlarded with unchristian bitterness, sarcastical, and unmannerly insinuations. It contained divers direct, grievous, and criminal charges and allegations against Mr. Edwards, which, I have since good reason to suppose, were all founded on jealous and uncharitable mistakes, and so were really gross slanders;

also many heavy and reproachful charges upon divers of Mr. Edwards's adherents, and some severe censures of them all indiscriminately; all of which, if not wholly false and groundless, yet were altogether unnecessary, and therefore highly criminal. Indeed I am fully convinced, that the whole of that composure, excepting the small part thereof above mentioned, was totally unchristian, a scandalous, abusive, injurious libel, against Mr. Edwards and his particular friends, especially the former, and highly provoking and detestable in the sight of God; for which I am heartily sorry and ashamed; and pray I may remember it with deep abasement and penitence all my days. Nor do I now think that the church's conduct in refusing to appear, and attend before that council to support the charges and allegations in the said remonstrance against Mr. Edwards and the said brethren, which they demanded, was ever vindicated by all the subtle answers that were given to the said demand; nor do I think that our conduct in that instance was capable of a defence. For it

appears to me, that by making such charges against them before the said council, we necessarily so far gave that council jurisdiction; and I own with sorrow and regret, that I, zealously, endeavoured that the church should perseveringly refuse to appear before the said council for the purpose aforesaid; which I humbly pray God to forgive.

“Another part of my conduct, sir, of which I have long repented, and for which I hereby declare my hearty sorrow, was my obstinate opposition to the last council's having any conference with the church; which the said council earnestly and repeatedly moved for, and which the church, as you know, finally denied. I think it discovered a great deal of pride and vain sufficiency in the church, and shewed them to be very opinionative, especially the chief sticklers, one of whom I was, and think it was running a most presumptuous risk, and acting the part of proud scorers, for us to refuse hearing, and candidly and seriously considering what that council could say or oppose to us; among whom there were

divers justly in great reputation for grace and wisdom.

In these instances, sir, of my conduct, and in others (to which you were not privy) in the course of that most melancholy contention with Mr. Edwards, I now see that I was very much influenced by vast pride, self-sufficiency, ambition, and vanity. I appear to myself vile, and doubtless much more so to others, who are more impartial; and do in the review thereof, abhor myself, and repent sorely: and if my own heart condemns me, it behoves me solemnly to remember, that God is greater, and knoweth all things. I hereby own, sir, that such treatment of Mr. Edwards, wherein I was so deeply concerned and active, was particularly, and very aggravatedly sinful and ungrateful in me; because I was not only under the common obligations of each individual of the society to him, as to a most able, diligent, and faithful pastor; but I had also received many instances of his tenderness, goodness, and generosity to me, as a young kinsman, whom he was disposed to treat in a most friendly manner.

“ Indeed, sir, I must own, that by my conduct in consulting and acting against Mr. Edwards within the time of our most unhappy disputes with him, and especially in and about that abominable ‘remonstrance,’ I have so far symbolized with Balaam, Ahitophel, and Judas, that I am confounded and filled with terror oftentimes when I attend to the most painful similitude.—And I freely confess, that on account of my conduct above mentioned, I have the greatest reason to tremble at those most solemn and awful words of our Saviour, Matt. xviii. 6. *Whoso shall offend one of these, &c.* and those in Luke, x. 16. *He that despiseth you, &c.*; and I am most sorely sensible, that nothing but that infinite grace and mercy which saved some of the betrayers and murderers of our blessed Lord, and the persecutors of his martyrs, can pardon me; in which alone I hope for pardon, for the sake of Christ, whose blood, blessed be God, cleanseth from all sin. On the whole, sir, I am convinced, that I have the greatest reason to say as David, ‘Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving-kind-

ness; according to the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions; wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin; for I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.—Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities: create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me; cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy holy Spirit from me: restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free spirit.' (Psalm li. 1—3, 9—12.)

“And I humbly apprehend that it greatly concerns the church of Northampton most seriously to examine, whether the many hard speeches, spoken by many particular members against their former pastor, some of which the church really countenanced, (and especially those spoken by the church as a body, in that most vile ‘remonstrance,’) are not so odious and ungodly, as to be utterly incapable of defence; whether the said church were not guilty of a great sin in being so willing and disposed, for so slight a cause, to part with so faithful and

godly a minister as Mr. Edwards was; and whether ever God will hold us guiltless till we cry to him for Christ's sake to pardon and save us from that judgment which such ungodly deeds deserve. And I most heartily wish and pray, that the town and church of Northampton would seriously and carefully examine, whether they have not abundant cause to judge that they are now lying under great guilt in the sight of God; and whether those of us who were concerned in that most awful contention with Mr. Edwards, can evermore reasonably expect God's favour and blessing, till our eyes are opened, and we become thoroughly convinced that we have greatly provoked the Most High, and have been injurious to one of the best of men; and until we shall be thoroughly convinced that we have dreadfully persecuted Christ, by persecuting and vexing that just man and servant of Christ; until we shall be humble as in the dust on account of it, and till we openly, in full terms, and without baulking the matter, confess the same before the world, and most humbly and earnestly seek forgiveness

of God, and do what we can to honour the memory of Mr. Edwards, and clear it of all the aspersions which we unjustly cast upon him; since God has been pleased to put it beyond our power to ask his forgiveness. Such terms, I am persuaded, the great and righteous God will hold us to, and that it will be in vain for us to hope to escape with impunity in any other way. This I am convinced of with regard to myself, and this way I most solemnly propose to take myself, (if God in his mercy shall give me opportunity,) that so by making free confession to God and man of my sin and guilt, and publicly taking shame to myself, I may give glory to the God of Israel, and do what in me lies, to clear the memory of that venerable man from the wrongs and injuries I was so active in bringing on his reputation and character; and I thank God that he has been pleased to spare my life to this time, and am sorry that I have delayed the affair so long.

Although I made the substance of almost all the foregoing defections in writing, but not exactly in the same manner, to Mr.

Edwards and the brethren who adhered to him, in Mr. Edwards's life, and before his removal from Stockbridge, and I have reason to believe that he, from his great candour and charity, heartily forgave me and prayed for me; yea, because that was not generally known, I look on myself obliged to take further steps; for while I kept silence, my bones waxed old; &c. For all these my great sins, therefore in the first place, I humbly and most earnestly ask forgiveness of God; in the next place, of the relatives and near friends of Mr. Edwards. I also ask the forgiveness of all those who were called Mr. Edwards's adherents; and of all the members of the ecclesiastical councils above mentioned; and lastly, of all christian people, who have had any knowledge of these matters. Amen.

-19- I have no desire, sir, that you should make any secret of this letter; but that you would communicate the same to whom you shall judge proper: and I purpose, if God shall give me opportunity, to procure it to be published in some one of the public newspapers; for I cannot devise any other

way of making known my sentiments of the foregoing matters to all who ought to be acquainted therewith; and therefore I think I ought to do it, whatever remarks I may foresee will be made thereon. Probably when it comes out, some of my acquaintance will produce one quite overrun with vapours; others will be furnished with matter for mirth and pleasantry; others will cursorily pass it over, as relating to matters quite stale; but some, I am persuaded, will rejoice to see me brought to a sense of my sin and duty; and I myself shall be conscious that I have done something of what the nature of the case admits, toward undoing what is, and long has been, to my greatest remorse and trouble that it was ever done.

"Sir, I desire that none would entertain a thought from my having spoken respectfully of Mr. Edwards, that I am disaffected to our present pastor; for the very reverse is true; and I have a reverend esteem, real value, and hearty affection for him, and bless God, that he has, notwithstanding all our unworthiness, given us one to succeed

Mr. Edwards, who, as I have reason to hope, is truly faithful.

"I conclude this long letter, by heartily desiring your prayers, that my repentance of my sins above mentioned may be unfeigned and genuine, and such as God in infinite mercy, for Christ's sake, will accept; and I beg leave to subscribe myself, Sir, your real, though very unworthy
Obedient, friendly, and obedient servant;

JOSEPH HAWLEY.

CHAP. V.

FROM HIS MISSION TO THE INDIANS UNTIL HIS DEATH.

SECT. I.

His Mission to the Indians at Stockbridge.

If we regard Mr. Edwards's deep acquaintance with the holy scriptures, and the influence of divine truth on his own heart; if we consider, also, his long experience in the work of the ministry, with his disposition to observe the operations of human minds and passions, and to improve such knowledge to the most profitable purposes,

we may safely say, that there were but few men, if any, better qualified to conduct a mission among the Indians. But, on the other hand, it may be questioned, whether his reclusive turn, his natural reserve, his contemplative habits, and the strong propensity of his mind, closely to investigate abstractedly every difficult subject that presented itself, were not unfavourable traits for such a situation, however beneficial it might be for his own improvement. Mr. Edwards was qualified to shine in some departments of the seats of learning, and was afterwards called to preside over one; but when he was delegated to instruct savage Indians, there was occasion to suspect a perfect suitableness in the appointment. On this, however, different persons may form different opinions; and it is our business now to give some account of the appointment.

The Indian mission at Stockbridge, a town in the western part of Massachusetts Bay, sixty miles from Northampton, being vacant by the death of the Rev. Mr. Sergeant, the honoured and reverend commis-

sioners for Indian affairs in Boston, who have the care and direction of it, applied to Mr. Edwards as the most suitable person they could think of, to be entrusted with that mission. At the same time he was invited by the inhabitants of Stockbridge; and being advised by the council above mentioned to accept the invitation, he repaired to Stockbridge, and was introduced and settled as missionary to the Indians there, by an ecclesiastical council called for that purpose, August 8th, 1751.

When Mr. Edwards first engaged in the mission, there was a flattering prospect of its being extensively serviceable, under his care and influence; not only to that tribe of Indians which was settled at Stockbridge, but among the Six Nations, some of whom were coming to Stockbridge to settle, bringing their own, and as many of their neighbours' children as they could obtain, to be educated and instructed there. For this end, a house for a boarding-school, which was projected by Mr. Sergeant, was erected on a tract of land appropriated to that use by the Indians at Stockbridge;

where the Indian children, male and female, were to have been clothed and fed, and instructed by proper persons in useful learning. The boys were to have been taught husbandry or mechanic trades, and the girls all sorts of women's work. For the encouragement of this design, some liberal subscriptions were made both in England and America. The general court of the province of Massachusetts Bay did much to promote the affair, and provided lands for the Mohocks who should incline to come. And the generous Mr. Hollis, to encourage the scheme, ordered twenty-four Indian children to be educated on the same footing, wholly at his cost. The society in London, for propagating the gospel among the Indians in and about New England, also directed their commissioners in Boston to do something considerable towards the design. But partly by reason of some unhappy differences that took place among those who had the chief management of this business at Stockbridge, of which a particular account would not be proper in this place; and partly by the breaking out of war

between England and France, which is generally very fatal to such affairs among Indians, this hopeful project came to nothing.

Mr. Edwards's labours were attended with no remarkably visible success while at Stockbridge; though he performed the business of his mission to the good acceptance of the inhabitants in general, both English and Indians, and of the commissioners, who supported him honourably, and confided very much in his judgment and wisdom. However, Stockbridge proved to Mr. Edwards a more quiet, and, on many accounts, a much more comfortable situation than the one he was in before. It being in a corner of the country, his time was not so occupied with company as it was at Northampton, though many of his friends, from almost all parts of the land, often made him pleasant and profitable visits. And he had not so much concern and trouble with other churches as he was obliged to have when at Northampton, by being frequently applied to for advice, and called to assist in ecclesiastical councils. Here therefore he pursued his

beloved studies more closely, and to better purpose than ever. In these six years he doubtless made swifter advances in knowledge than before, and added more to his manuscripts than in any equal space of time. And this was probably as *useful* a part of his life as any. For in this time he wrote the last two books that he published,* (of which a more particular account will be given hereafter,) by which he has doubtless greatly served the church of Christ, and will be a blessing to many thousands yet unborn.

Thus, after his uprightness and faithfulness had been sufficiently tried at Northampton, his divine Master provided for him a quiet retreat, which was rendered the more sweet by the preceding storm; and where he had a better opportunity to pursue and finish some important work which God had for him to do: so that when in his own judgment, as well as that of others, his usefulness seemed to be cut off, he found greater opportunities of service than ever.

* His Treatises on "The Will," and on "Original Sin."

SECT. II.

His Election to the Presidency of New Jersey College.

During his residence at Stockbridge, Mr. Edwards appears to have given full scope to his propensities and genius, stimulated by his ardent love of truth, and under the controul of a correct judgment. While at Northampton, his avocations were unavoidably numerous, and scarcely compatible with a profound attention to subjects he might be disposed to investigate; but at Stockbridge, he found himself in that respect more at liberty. After having been so long in the ministry elsewhere, his pulpit preparations would require less time than before. His studies were less interrupted by company and calls. Former anxieties were now removed; his mind was drawn more closely to God, from his past experience of the fickleness of men, and thereby became more composed, more enlightened, and more elevated. Here he was led to investigate subjects of radical importance in morals and theology, and to trace them to their first principles. And here he pub-

lished his master-piece of inquiry and close reasoning, his Treatise on the Will, which completely established his character as an adept in metaphysical science, and as a profound divine. The celebrity he obtained by this work, and very deservedly obtained, had, doubtless, no small influence on the trustees of New Jersey College, among other considerations, in looking to Mr. Edwards to become their President, on the death of Mr. Burr, his son-in-law.

The Rev. Aaron Burr, President of New Jersey College, died on the 24th Sept. 1757; and, at the next meeting of the trustees, Mr. Edwards was chosen his successor; the news of which was quite unexpected, and not a little surprising to him. He deemed himself in many respects to be so unqualified for the situation, that he wondered how gentlemen of so good judgment, and so well acquainted with him, as he knew some of the trustees were, should think of him. He had many objections in his own mind against undertaking the office, both from his unfitness, and his particular circumstances; yet could not certainly de-

termine that it was not his duty to accept it. The following extract of a letter which he wrote to the trustees, will give the reader a view of his sentiments and exercises on this occasion, as well as of the great designs he was deeply engaged in, and zealously prosecuting.

" Stockbridge, 19th Oct. 1757.

" REV. AND HON. GENTLEMEN,

"I was not a little surprised on receiving the unexpected notice of your having made choice of me to succeed the late President Burr, as the head of Nassau Hall. I am much in doubt whether I am called to undertake the business, which you have done me the unmerited honour to choose me for. If some regard may be had to my outward comfort, I might mention the many inconveniences and great detriment which may be sustained, by my removing with my numerous family, so far from all the estate I have in the world (without any prospect of disposing of it, under present circumstances, but with great loss) now when we have scarcely got over the trouble

and damage sustained by our removal from Northampton, and have but just begun to have our affairs in a comfortable situation for a subsistence in this place; and the expence I must immediately be at to put myself into circumstances tolerably comporting with the needful support of the honour of the office I am invited to; which will not well consist with my ability.

“ But this is not my main objection: the chief difficulties in my mind, in the way of accepting this important and arduous office, are these two: First, my own defects, unfitting me for such an undertaking, many of which are generally known; besides other, which my own heart is conscious of. I have a constitution, in many respects peculiarly unhappy, attended with flaccid solids; vapid, sizy, and scarce fluids, and a low tide of spirits; often occasioning a kind of childish weakness and contemptibleness of speech, presence, and demeanour; with a disagreeable dulness and stiffness, much unfitting me for conversation, but more especially for the government of a college. This makes me shrink at the thoughts of

taking upon me, in the decline of life, such a new and great business, attended with such a multiplicity of cares, and requiring such a degree of activity, alertness, and spirit of government; especially as succeeding one so remarkably well qualified in these respects, giving occasion to every one to remark the wide difference. I am also deficient in some parts of learning, particularly in Algebra, and the higher parts of Mathematics, and in the Greek Classics; my Greek learning having been chiefly in the New Testament.—The other thing is this; that my engaging in this business will not well consist with those views, and that course of employ in my study, which have long engaged and swallowed up my mind, and been the chief entertainment and delight of my life.

“ And here, honoured sirs, (emboldened by the testimony I have now received of your unmerited esteem, to rely on your candour,) I will with freedom open myself to you.

“ My method of study, from my first beginning the work of the ministry, has

been very much by writing; applying myself in this way to improve every important hint; pursuing the clue to my utmost, when any thing in reading, meditation, or conversation, has been suggested to my mind, that seemed to promise light, in any weighty point; thus penning what appeared to me my best thoughts, on innumerable subjects for my own benefit. The longer I prosecuted my studies in this method, the more habitual it became, and the more pleasant and profitable I found it. The further I travelled in this way, the more and wider the field opened, which has occasioned my laying out many things in my mind to do in this manner, if God should spare my life, which my heart hath been much upon: particularly many things against most of the prevailing errors of the present day, which I cannot with any patience see maintained (to the utter subverting of the gospel of Christ) with so high a hand, and so long continued a triumph, with so little controul, when it appears so evident to me, that there is truly no foundation for any of this glorying

and insult. I have already published something on one of the main points in dispute between the Arminians and Calvinists: and have it in view, God willing, (as I have already signified to the public,) in like manner to consider all the other controverted points, and have done much towards a preparation for it.—But besides these, I have had on my mind and heart, (which I long ago began, not with any view to publication) a great work, which I call a *History of the Work of Redemption*, a body of divinity in an entire new method, being thrown into the form of a history; considering the affair of Christian Theology, as the whole of it, in each part, stands in reference to the great work of redemption by Jesus Christ; which I suppose to be of all others the grand design of God, and the *summum* and *ultimum* of all the divine operations and decrees; particularly considering all parts of the grand scheme in their historical order. The order of their existence, or their being brought forth to view, in the course of divine dispensations, or the wonderful series of successive acts and events;

beginning from eternity, and descending from thence to the great work and successive dispensations of the infinitely wise God in time; considering the chief events coming to pass in the church of God, and revolutions in the world of mankind, affecting the state of the church and the affair of redemption, which we have account of in history or prophecy; till at last we come to the general resurrection, last judgment, and consummation of all things; when it shall be said, *It is done.* *I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End.* Concluding my work; with the consideration of that perfect state of things, which shall be finally settled, to last for eternity. This history will be carried on with regard to all three worlds, heaven, earth, and hell; considering the connected, successive events and alterations in each, so far as the scriptures give any light; introducing all parts of divinity in that order which is most scriptural and most natural; a method which appears to me the most beautiful and entertaining, wherein every divine doctrine will appear to greatest advantage, in the brightest

light, in the most striking manner, shewing the admirable contexture and harmony of the whole.

“ I have also for my own profit and entertainment, done much towards another great work, which I call the *Harmony of the Old and New Testament*, in three parts. The first, considering the prophecies of the Messiah, his redemption and kingdom; the evidences of their references to the Messiah, &c.; comparing them all one with another, demonstrating their agreement, true scope, and sense; also considering all the various particulars wherein these prophecies have their exact fulfilment; shewing the universal, precise, and admirable correspondence between predictions and events. The second part, considering the types of the Old Testament, shewing the evidence of their being intended as representations of the great things of the gospel of Christ; and the agreement of the type with the antitype. The third, and great part, considering the harmony of the Old and New Testament, as to doctrine and precept. In the course of this work, I find there will

because for an explanation of a very great part of the holy scripture; which may, in such a view, be explained in a method, which to me seems the most entertaining and profitable, best tending to lead the mind to a view of the true spirit, design, life, and soul of the scriptures, as well as their proper use and improvement.—I have also many other things in hand, in some of which I have made great progress, which I will not trouble you with an account of. Some of these things, if divine providence favour, I should be willing to attempt a publication of. So far as I myself am able to judge of what talents I have, for benefiting my fellow-creatures by word, I think I can write better than I can speak.

“ My heart is so much in these studies, that I cannot feel willing to put myself into an incapacity to pursue them any more in the future part of my life, to such a degree as I must, if I undertake to go through the same course of employ, in the office of a President, that Mr. Burr did, instructing in all the languages, and taking the whole

care of the instruction of one of the classes in all parts of learning, besides his other labours. If I should see light to determine me to accept the place offered me, I should be willing to take upon me the work of a President, so far as it consists in the general inspection of the whole society; and to be subservient to the school, as to their order and methods of study and instruction, assisting myself in immediate instruction in the arts and sciences, (as discretion should direct and occasion serve, and the state of things require,) especially the senior class; and added to all, should be willing to do the whole work of a professor of divinity, in public and private lectures, proposing questions to be answered, and some to be discussed in writing and free conversation, in meetings of graduates and others, appointed in proper seasons for these ends. It would be now out of my way to spend time in a constant teaching of the languages; unless it be the Hebrew tongue, which I should be willing to improve myself in, by instructing others.

“On the whole I am much at a loss, with

respect to the way of duty in this important affair: I am in doubt, whether if I should engage in it I should not do what both you and I would be sorry for afterwards. Nevertheless, I think the greatness of the affair, and the regard due to so worthy and venerable a body, as that of the trustees of Nassau Hall, requires my taking the matter into serious consideration. And unless you should appear to be discouraged by the things which I have now represented, as to any further expectation from me, I shall proceed to ask advice of such as I esteem most wise, friendly, and faithful: if after the mind of the commissioners in Boston is known, it appears that they consent to leave me at liberty, with respect to the business they have employed me in here."

In this suspense he determined to ask the advice of a number of gentlemen in the ministry, on whose judgment and friendship he could rely. Accordingly, at the request of himself and his people, these gentlemen met at Stockbridge, January 4, 1758; and, having heard Mr. Edwards's representation of the matter, and what his

people had to say by way of objection against his removal, deemed it to be his duty to accept the invitation to the presidency of the college. When they published their judgment and advice, Mr. Edwards appeared uncommonly moved and affected with it, and fell into tears on the occasion, which was very unusual for him in the presence of others: and soon after said to the gentlemen, that it was matter of wonder to him, that they could so easily, as they appeared to do, get over the objections he had made against his removal. But as he thought it right to be directed by their advice, he should now endeavour cheerfully to undertake it, believing he was in the way of his duty.

Accordingly, having had, by the application of the trustees of the college, the consent of the commissioners to resign their mission; he girded up his loins, and set off from Stockbridge for Princeton in January. He left his family at Stockbridge, not to be removed till spring. He had two daughters at Princeton, Mrs. Burr, the widow of the late President, and his oldest daughter that was

unmarried. His arrival at Princeton was to the great satisfaction and joy of the college. And indeed all the best friends to the institution, and to the interest of religion, were highly gratified and pleased with the appointment.

The corporation met as soon as they could with convenience, after his arrival at the college, when he was fixed in the President's chair. While at Princeton, before his sickness, he preached in the college-hall sabbath after sabbath, to the great acceptance of the hearers; but did nothing as President, unless it was to give out some questions in divinity to the senior class, to be answered before him; each one having opportunity to study and write what he thought proper upon them. When they came together to answer them, they found so much entertainment and profit, especially by the light and instruction Mr. Edwards communicated in what he said upon the questions, when they had delivered what they had to say, that they spoke of it with the greatest satisfaction and wonder.

During this time, Mr. Edwards seemed to enjoy an uncommon degree of the presence of God. He told his daughters he once had great exercise, concern; and fear, relative to his engaging in that business; but since it now appeared, so far as he could see, that he was called of God to that place and work, he did cheerfully devote himself to it, leaving himself and the event with God, to order what seemed to him good.

The small-pox had now become very common in the country, and was then at Princeton, and likely to spread. Mr. Edwards had never had it; and as inoculation was then practised with great success in those parts, he proposed to be inoculated, if the physician should advise it, and the corporation would give their consent.—Accordingly, by the advice of the physician, and with the consent of the corporation, he was inoculated February 13th. He had it favourably, and it was thought all danger was over; but a secondary fever set in, and by reason of a number of pustules in his throat, the obstruction was such, that the

medicines necessary to check the fever, could not be administered. It therefore raged till it put an end to his life on the 22d of March, 1758, in the 55th year of his age.

After he was sensible that he could not survive, a little before his death, he called his daughter, who attended him in his sickness, and addressed her in a few words, which were immediately taken down in writing, as nearly as could be recollected, and are as follow:—"Dear Lucy, it seems to me to be the will of God that I must shortly leave you; therefore give my kindest love to my dear wife, and tell her that the uncommon union which has so long subsisted between us, has been of such a nature, as I trust is spiritual, and therefore will continue for ever: and I hope she will be supported under so great a trial, and submit cheerfully to the will of God. And as to my children, you are now like to be left fatherless, which I hope will be an inducement to you all to seek a Father who will never fail you. And as to my funeral, I would have it to be like

Mr. Burr's; and any additional sum of money that might be expected to be laid out that way, I would have it disposed of to charitable uses."*

He said but very little in his sickness; but was an admirable instance of patience and resignation to the last. Just at the close of life, as some persons who stood by, expecting he would breathe his last in a few minutes, were lamenting his death, not only as a great frown on the college, but as having a dark aspect on the interest of religion in general; to their surprise, not imagining that he heard, or ever would

* President Burr ordered, on his death-bed, that his funeral should not be attended with pomp and cost, by giving away a great number of costly mourning scarfs, &c. and by the consumption of a great quantity of spirituous liquors: which is an extravagance that is become too customary in those parts, especially at the funerals of the great and the rich. He ordered that nothing should be expended but what was agreeable to the dictates of christian decency; and that the sum which must be expended at a modish funeral, above the necessary cost of a decent one, should be given to the poor, out of his estate. It is to be wished and hoped, that the laudable example of these two worthy Presidents, in which they bear their dying testimony against a practice so unbecoming and of such bad tendency so many ways, may have some good effect.

· speak another word, he said, "Trust in God, and ye need not fear." These were his last words. What could have been more suitable to the occasion ! And what need of more ! In these is as much matter of instruction and support, as if he had written a volume. This is the only consolation to his bereaved friends, who are sensible of the loss they and the church of Christ have sustained in his death ; God is all-sufficient, and still has the care of his church.

· He appeared to have the uninterrupted use of his reason to the last, and died with as much calmness and composure, to all appearance, as if he had been only going to sleep. The physician who inoculated and constantly attended him has the following words in his letter to Mrs. Edwards on this occasion : " Never did any mortal man more fully and clearly evidence the sincerity of all his professions, by one continued, universal, calm, cheerful resignation and patient submission to the divine will, through every stage of his disease, than he. Not so much as one discontented expression,

nor the least appearance of murmuring through the whole! And never did any person expire with more perfect freedom from pain: not so much as one distortion; but in the most proper sense of the words, he really fell asleep."

CHAP. VI.

His Publications, Manuscripts, and Genius as a Writer.

MR. EDWARDS was highly esteemed, and indeed celebrated, as an author, both in America and Europe. His publications naturally excite in the reader of judgment and moral taste an exalted opinion of his greatness and piety. His works met with a good reception in Scotland especially, and procured for him great esteem and applause. A gentleman of note there for his superior genius and talents, has the following expressions concerning Mr. Edwards, in a letter to one of his correspondents in America: "I looked on him as incomparably

the greatest divine and (moral*) philosopher in Britain or her colonies; and rejoiced that one so eminently qualified for teaching divinity was chosen President of New Jersey College." In another letter, he adds, "Ever since I was acquainted with Mr. Edwards's writings, I have looked upon him as the greatest divine this age has produced." And a reverend gentleman from Holland observed, "That Mr. Edwards's writings, especially on the *Freedom of the Will*, were held in great esteem there;" and "that the professors of the celebrated academy presented their compliments to President Edwards." This gentleman further remarks, that "Several members of the Classes of Amsterdam gave their thanks, by him, to pious Mr. Edwards, for his just observations on Mr. Brainerd's Life; which book was translated in Holland, and was highly approved by the university of Utrecht.

Viewing Mr. Edwards as a writer of sermons, we cannot apply to him the epithet

* This must have been the writer's meaning.

eloquent, in the common acceptation of the term. We find in him nothing of the great masters of eloquence, except good sense, forcible reasoning, and the power of moving the passions. Oratorical pomp, a cryptic method, luxurious descriptions presented to the imagination, and a rich variety of rhetorical figures, enter not into his plan. But his thoughts are well digested, and his reasoning conclusive; he produces considerations which not only force the assent, but also touch the conscience; he urges divine authority by quoting and explaining scripture, in a form calculated to rouse the soul. He moves the passions, not by little artifices, like the professed rhetorician, but by saying what is much to the purpose in a plain, serious, and interesting way; thus making reason, conscience, fear, and love, to be decidedly in his favour. In this manner the passions are most profitably affected; the more generous ones take the lead, and they are ever directed in the way of practical utility.

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From what has been said, it is easy to conjecture, that close discussions were peculiarly suited to Mr. Edwards's talents. And, as a further evidence to shew which way his genius had its prevailing bent, it is observable, that his style improves in proportion to the abstrusity of his subject. Hence, generally speaking, the productions, especially those published by himself, which enter into close, profound, metaphysical distinctions, seem to have as much perspicuity as the nature of the case will admit. To be convinced of the propriety of this remark, it is only necessary to consult the *Treatise on the Will*; a work justly thought by able judges to be one of the greatest efforts of the human intellect. Here the author shews such force and strength of mind, such judgment, penetration, and accuracy of thought, as justly entitle him to the character of one of the greatest geniuses of the age. We may add, that this treatise goes further, perhaps, towards settling the main points in controversy between Calvinists and Arminians, than any thing

that had been written. Herein he has abundantly demonstrated the chief principles, on which Arminians build their whole scheme, to be false and most absurd. Whenever, therefore, this book comes to be generally attended to, it will doubtless prove fatal to Arminian and Pelagian sentiments.

Though the work now mentioned afforded the fairest opportunity for metaphysical investigation; yet, the same penetrating turn, the same accuracy of discrimination, and the same closeness of reasoning, distinguish many of his other productions. Among these we might mention particularly, his book on Original Sin, his Discourse on Justification, his Dissertation on the Nature of True Virtue, and that concerning the End for which God created the World. If the advocates of selfish virtue, and of universal restoration, will do themselves the justice to examine these Dissertations with candour and closeness, they may see cause to be of the author's mind. His other discourses are

excellent, including much divinity, and tending above most that are published to awaken the conscience of the sinner, as well as to instruct and quicken the christian. The sermon preached at Enfield, 8th July, 1741, entitled "Sinners in the hand of an angry God," was attended with remarkable impressions on many of the hearers. In his treatise entitled "An humble attempt to promote explicit agreement, and visible union of God's people in extraordinary prayer, for the revival of religion," he evinces great acquaintance with scripture, and a remarkable attention to the prophetic part of it.

Mr. Edwards left a great number of volumes in manuscript, which he wrote in a miscellaneous manner on almost all subjects in divinity. This he did, not with any design that they should ever be published in that form, but for the satisfaction and improvement of his own mind, and that he might retain the thoughts, which appeared to him worth preserving. Some idea of the progress he had made, and the mate-

rials he had collected in this way, he gives in his letter to the trustees of the college, when assigning his reasons against accepting the Presidency. He had written much on the prophecies concerning the Messiah, on justification, the divinity of Christ, and the eternity of future punishment. He wrote much on the bible, in the same manner; penning his thoughts on particular passages, as they occurred to him in reading or meditation.

As the method he took to have his miscellaneous writings in good order, so as to be able with ease to turn to any particular subject, is perhaps as good as any, if not the best that has been proposed to the public; some account of it is here given, for the use of young students who have not yet adopted any method, and are disposed to improve their minds by writing. He *numbered* all his miscellaneous writings. The first thing he wrote is No. 1, the second No. 2, and so on. And when he had occasion to write on any particular topic, he first set down the number, and then

wrote the **SUBJECT** in large characters, that it might not escape his eye, when he should have occasion to turn to it. For instance, if he was going to write on the happiness of angels, and his last No. was 148, he would begin thus—149. **ANGELS**, their happiness.—When he had written what he designed, he turned to his alphabetical table, and under the letter **A**, inserted **Angels**, their happiness, if this was not there already, and then set down the number 149, close at the right hand of it. And when he had occasion to write any new thoughts on the same subject; if the number of his miscellanies were increased, so that his last number was 261, he set the number 262, and then the subject as before. And when he had done writing for that time, he turned to his table, to the word **angels**; and at the right hand of the number 149, set down 262. By this means he had no occasion to leave any chasms; but began his next subject where he left off his last. The number of his miscellaneous writings, ranged in this manner, amounts to above 1400. And yet

by a table contained on a sheet or two of paper, any thing he wrote can be turned to at pleasure.

The following lines in a poem by Dr. Dwight, entitled, "The Triumph of Infidelity," may not be an unsuitable close to our account of this eminent man. The poem is written in a strain of irony, as well as the explanatory notes; and though the descriptions are supposed to be given by the prince of darkness, yet most of them are striking likenesses to the originals. This is given by way of *complaint*.

" But, my chief bane, my apostolic foe,
In life, in labours, source of every woe,
From scenes obscure did heav'n his EDWARDS call,
That moral Newton, and that second Paul.
He, in clear view, saw sacred systems roll,
Of reasoning worlds, around their central soul;
Saw love attractive every system bind,
The parent linking to each filial mind;
The end of heav'n's high works restless shew'd,
Creating glory, and created good;

And, in one little life, the gospel more
 Disclos'd, than all earth's myriads kenn'd before.
 Beneath his standard, lo! what numbers rise,
 To care for truth, and combat for the skies!
 Arm'd at all points, they try the battling field,
 With reason's sword, and faith's ethereal shield."

A Catalogue of President Edwards's Works, published in Eight Volumes, royal octavo.

VOL. I.—Enquiry into the Freedom of the Will.—A Dissertation concerning the End for which God created the World.

VOL. II.—A Dissertation concerning the Nature of True Virtue.—The great Christian Doctrine of Original Sin defended.—Man's original Blindness in the Things of Religion.—An humble Attempt to promote explicit Agreement and visible Union of God's People in extraordinary Prayer.

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Scotland, for propagating Christian Knowledge.—
Mr. Brainerd's Remains, containing Letters and
other Papers.—A Sermon preached at the Ordination
of Mr. Brainerd, by the Rev. E. Pemberton, A. M.—
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Affections, in two Letters to Mr. Gillespie.—Christian
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Warning to Professors; or, the great Guilt of those
who attend on the Ordinances of Divine Worship, and
yet allow themselves in any known Wickedness.—The
final Judgment; or, the World judged righteously by
Jesus Christ.—Sinners in Zion tenderly warned; or,
the Fearfulness which will hereafter surprise sinners
in Zion, represented and improved.—The End of the
Wicked contemplated by the Righteous; or, the Tor-
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VOL. VIII.—Five Sermons on different Occasions.—Miscellaneous Observations on important Theological Subjects.—Remarks on important Theological Controversies.—Distinguishing Marks of a Work of the Spirit of God.

APPENDIX;

CONTAINING,

- I. A SKETCH OF MRS. EDWARDS: LIFE AND CHARACTER.**
- II. A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF MRS. ESTHER BURR.**
- III. THE LIFE AND CHARACTER OF THE REV. JONATHAN EDWARDS, D. D.**

APPENDIX I.

A Sketch of Mrs. Edwards's Life and Character.

Mrs. SARAH EDWARDS, the amiable consort of President Edwards, did not long survive him. In September, 1758, she set out on a journey to Philadelphia, to take care of her two orphan grand-children, who were then in that city; and had been since the death of Mrs. Burr. As they had no relations in those parts, Mrs. Edwards proposed to take them into her own family. She arrived there by the way of Princeton, Sept. 21, in good health, having had a comfortable journey. But in a few days she was suddenly seized with a violent dysentery, which put an end to her life on the fifth day, October 2d, in the 49th year of her age. She did not converse much in her sickness; being exercised most of the

time with violent pain. On the morning of the day she died, apprehending that her death was near, she expressed her entire resignation to God, her desire that he might be glorified in all things, and her solicitude that she might be enabled to honour him to the last. In such a temper, calm and resigned, she continued till she expired.

Her remains were carried to Princeton, which is about forty miles from Philadelphia, and deposited with Mr. Edwards's; so that they who were in their lives remarkably lovely and pleasant, in their death were not much divided. Thus the father and mother, the son and daughter, were laid together in the grave, within the space of little more than a year; though a few months before, their dwelling was more than one hundred and fifty miles apart:—two presidents of the same college, and their consorts, than whom it will doubtless be difficult to find four persons more valuable and useful!

By these repeated strokes, following in quick succession, and completed in a few

months, what a loss has the American part of the christian world sustained! By these deaths, how much knowledge, wisdom, and holiness, is gone from the earth for ever! And where are they who will make good the loss!—But God is all-sufficient.

Mrs. Edwards was born at New-Haven, in Connecticut, Jan. 9, 1710. Her father was the Rev. James Pierpoint, who was long an eminent, pious, and useful minister of the gospel at New-Haven.* She was married to Mr. Edwards, July 20, 1727, in the eighteenth year of her age.

Though Mrs. Edwards's entire character will not be attempted here, yet it is thought proper to mention a few particulars, in which she excelled, and exhibited an example worthy the imitation of all.—She remembered her Creator in the days of youth, and became truly and remarkably religious

* He was the eldest son of Mr. John Pierpoint of Roxbury, who came from England. Her mother was Mrs. Mary Pierpoint, eldest daughter of Mr. Samuel Hooker, minister of the gospel at Farmington, in Connecticut, and son of Mr. Thomas Hooker, once minister of the gospel at Hartford, and famous as a divine through all the churches in England.

at about five years old. In her person she was comely and beautiful; and of a pleasant, agreeable countenance. The law of kindness was in her tongue; her behaviour was courteous, and her conduct amiable. She was eminent for her piety and experimental religion. Religious conversation was much her delight; and this she promoted in all companies, when proper. Her discourse shewed at once her good understanding in divine things, and the great impression they made on her mind. The friends of true piety, and they who were ready to engage in serious conversation, and delighted in that which was most essential and practical, were her chosen associates. To such persons she would open her mind freely, and tell them the exercises of her own heart, and what God had done for her soul, for their encouragement in the ways of wisdom. Her mind appeared to attend to divine things constantly, on all occasions, and in every business of life. To the sacred duties of the closet she was a great friend, and took much delight in them. She highly prized social religion.

When at Northampton, she used to frequent the private meetings for divine worship; and even promoted and attended meetings of persons of her own sex only, for prayer and religious conversation. She was not only a constant attendant on public worship, but also behaved with great gravity and seriousness in the house of God.

She paid proper deference to Mr. Edwards, and treated him with respect at all times. As he was of a weakly, infirm constitution, and was peculiarly exact in his diet, she was a tender nurse to him; cheerfully attending upon him, and ministering to his comfort. She spared no pains in conforming to his inclinations, and making things agreeable and comfortable to him; accounting it her greatest glory, and that wherein she could best serve God and her generation, to be the means of promoting Mr. Edwards's happiness and usefulness in this way. And no person of discernment could be conversant in the family, without observing and admiring the great harmony, and mutual love and esteem that subsisted

between them.—Yet, when she herself laboured under bodily disorders and pains, which was often the case, she was not wont to be full of complaints, and to put on a dejected or fretful countenance, being out of temper with every body and every thing, as if she was disregarded and neglected; but she would bear up under them with patience, and a kind of cheerfulness and good humour.

She was a good economist, managing her household affairs with discretion and diligence. She was very careful that nothing should be wasted and lost; and often, when she did any thing to save a *small* matter, or directed her children to do so, or saw them *waste* any thing, she would mention the words of our Saviour, "*that nothing be lost*;" which, she said, she often thought of, as containing a maxim worth remembering; especially when considered as the reason why his disciples should gather up the fragments. She took almost the entire charge of the temporal affairs of the family, without doors and within; in this she was peculiarly suited to Mr. Edwards's disposition,

who chose to have as little care as possible of any worldly business.

She had an excellent way of governing her children; she knew how to make them regard and obey her cheerfully, without loud, angry words, much less heavy blows. She seldom struck her children; and in speaking to them adopted mild, gentle, and pleasant terms. If any correction was needful, it was not her manner to give it in a passion. And when she had occasion to reprove and rebuke, she would do it in few words, without warmth and noise, but with all calmness and gentleness of mind. In her directions or reproofs, in matters of importance, she would address herself to the reason of her children, that they might not only know her inclination and will, but at the same time be convinced of the propriety of them. She had occasion to speak but once; she was cheerfully obeyed; murmuring and answering again were not known among them. And the kind and gentle treatment they had from their mother, while she strictly and punctually maintained her parental authority, seemed

naturally to generate and promote a filial respect; and to lead them to a mild, tender treatment of each other. Quarrelling and contention, which too frequently take place among children, were not known among them. She carefully observed the first appearances of resentment and ill-will towards any in her young children; and did not connive at them, as many who have the charge of such do, but was careful to show her displeasure, and suppress them to the utmost; though not by angry words, which often provoke children to wrath, and stir up their irascible passions, rather than abate them. Being thoroughly sensible that, in many respects, the chief care of forming children by government and instruction, naturally lies on mothers; (as they are most with their children at an age when they commonly receive impressions by which they are very much formed for life;) she was extremely solicitous to do her part in this important business. When she met with any special difficulty in this matter, or foresaw any, she was wont to apply to Mr. Edwards for advice and assistance; and

on such occasions they would both attend to it, as a concern of great importance.

But this was not the only way in which she expressed her care for her offspring. She thought that parents have a great and important duty to discharge towards their children, before they are capable of government and instruction. She, therefore, constantly and earnestly prayed for them, and bore them on her heart before God, in all her secret and most solemn addresses to him; and that even before they were born. The prospect of becoming the mother of a rational, immortal creature, was sufficient to lead her to bow before God daily for his blessing on it; even redemption, and eternal life by Jesus Christ. So that through all the pain, labour, and sorrow, which attended her as the mother of children, she was in travail for them, that they might be born of God.

As the law of kindness was in her tongue, so her hands were not withheld from beneficence and charity. She was always a friend and patroness of the poor and helpless; and abounded much in acts of bene-

volence, as well as in recommending them to others on all proper occasions. She was remarkable for her kindness to the friends and visitants, who resorted to Mr. Edwards; sparing no pains to make them welcome, and to provide for their convenience. She was also peculiarly attentive to strangers, who came to her house. She soon got acquainted with them, and shewed such concern for their comfort, and so kindly offered what she thought they needed, as to discover that she knew the heart of a stranger, and well understood how to do it good. Her guests were thus made to feel in some measure as if they were at home.

She made it a rule to speak well of all, so far as she could with truth and justice. She was not wont to dwell with delight on the imperfections of any; and when she heard persons speaking ill of others, she would say what she thought she could, with truth and justice, in their excuse; or divert the obloquy by mentioning those things that were commendable in them. Thus she was tender of every one's character, even of their's who injured and spoke evil of her;

and carefully guarded against the too common vice of evil-speaking and backbiting. She could bear injuries and reproaches with great patience, without any disposition to render evil for evil; but on the contrary, was ready to pity and forgive those who appeared to be her enemies.

She had long told her intimate friends that she had, after continued struggles and exercises, obtained, by God's grace, an habitual willingness to die herself, or part with any of her nearest relatives; that she was willing to bring forth children for death; and resign him whom she esteemed so great a blessing to herself and her family, her nearest partner, whenever God should see fit to take him. And when she had her greatest trial, in the death of Mr. Edwards, she found the help and comfort of such a disposition. Her conduct on this occasion was such as to excite the admiration of her friends: it discovered that she was sensible of the great loss which she and her children had sustained in his decease; and at the same time shewed, that she was submissive and resigned, and had

those invisible supports which enabled her to trust in God with calmness, hope, and humble joy.

Mr. and Mrs. Edwards lived together in the married state above thirty years; in which time they had eleven children, three sons and eight daughters. The second daughter died Feb. 14, 1748, of whom there is some account in Mr. Edwards's Life of Brainerd. The third daughter was Mrs. Burr, the wife of President Burr, already mentioned. The youngest daughter, Elizabeth, died soon after her parents.

APPENDIX II.

*A brief Account of Mrs. Esther Burr, President
Edwards's Daughter.*

MRS. BURR and her children were inoculated at the same time that her father was, and had recovered when he died. But after she was perfectly restored, to all appearance, she was suddenly seized with a violent disorder, which carried her off in a few days; and to which the physician said he could affix no name but that of *a messenger sent, suddenly to call her out of the world.** She died April 7, 1758, sixteen

* Though the physician bore this testimony, yet perhaps, the greater probability is, on cool reflection, that some noxious humours had still remained in her constitution, as a predisposing cause of the "violent disorder." However this may be, the case of her father is a decided one; that alarming disease, the Small Pox, in the mildest form in which it can be administered, proved fatal to him, and indeed to thousands more. Inoculation is undoubtedly

days after her father, in the twenty-seventh year of her age. She was married to Mr. Burr, June 29, 1752. By him she had two children, a son and a daughter.

Mrs. Burr exceeded most of her sex in the beauty of her person, as well as in her behaviour and conversation; and she discovered an unaffected, natural freedom towards persons of all ranks, with whom she conversed. Her genius was much more than common. She had a lively, sprightly imagination, a quick and penetrating thought, and a good judgment. She had a peculiar smartness in her make and temper, which yet was consistent with pleasantness and good nature; and she

the safest mode of receiving the infection, as innumerable experiments evince;—but we are grateful and happy to remark, that Providence hath now shewn us “a more excellent way.” We rejoice that the Vaccine Inoculation gains the confidence of the public, through a great part of the world, in proportion to the growing extent of practice. And surely those who occupy posts of influence, whether in the state or in the church, deserve well of both, of mankind in general, and of posterity, while they improve that influence, in whatever form, towards eradicating that odious and fatal disorder, the Small Pox, by a safe and easy substitute.—W.

knew how to be agreeable and facetious without trespassing on the bounds of gravity, or strict and serious religion. In short, she seemed formed to please, and especially to please one of Mr. Burr's taste and talents. But that which crowned all her excellencies, and formed her chief glory, was RELIGION. She appeared to be the subject of divine impressions when seven or eight years old; and she made a public profession of religion when about fifteen. Her conversation, until her death, was exemplary, and as becometh godliness. But as her religious sentiments and exercises will best be understood by those who were strangers to her, from her own words, we shall present our readers with a few extracts: the following are made from letters which she wrote not long before her death.—The first is an extract from a letter she wrote to her mother, not long after Mr. Burr's death, dated at Princeton, October 7, 1757. After giving some account of Mr. Burr's death, and representing the sense she had of the magnitude of the

loss she and her children had sustained,* she writes in the following words:

“No doubt, dear madam, it will be some comfort to you to hear, that God has not utterly forsaken, although he has cast down. I would speak it to the glory of God's name, that I think he has in an uncommon degree discovered himself to be an all-sufficient God, a full fountain of all good. Although all streams were cut off, yet the fountain is left full.—I think I have been enabled to cast my care upon him, and

* Great indeed was the loss which these children sustained by the death of both parents, the guide of their tender childhood, and the dangerous period of their youth, in the paths of wisdom. Professor Burr's daughter married Topping Reeve, esq. an eminent lawyer at Litchfield, in the state of Connecticut, who became one of the justices of the superior court; a very sensible, worthy man; and a steadfast friend to religion; manifesting a conscientious sense of duty, and being much esteemed. Mrs. Reeve was a woman of superior understanding and accomplishments. She died several years since, after having long laboured under peculiar feebleness of constitution, and much disease. They left one son, who was educated in Yale College.—The son of President Burr, notwithstanding so great a loss, rose indeed to worldly honours that by some would be deemed flattering, as Vice-President of the United States. But if he had a serious attachment to christianity,

have found great peace and calm in my mind, such as this world cannot give or take.—I have had uncommon freedom, and nearness to the throne of grace. God has seemed sensibly near in such a supporting and comforting manner, that I think I have never experienced the like. God has helped me to review my past and present mercies, with some heart-affecting degree of thankfulness.

“ I think God has given me such a sense of the vanity of the world, and uncertainty of all sublunary enjoyments, as I never had

or influentially believed the grand truths for which his worthy ancestors and relatives have benevolently contended, and some of whom, to their honour, do still contend, could he have sanctioned the cruel, the savage practice of duelling? The principles of infidelity, as all other principles, are known by their fruits; they originate, like every other vice, in our perverted, fallen nature; and easy is the transition from these principles to practices the most licentious and baneful. “ From whence come wars and fightings among you,” says a plain but wise man; “ come they not hence, even of your lusts, &c.?” Jam. iv. 1—10. When any states, as such, notoriously and shamefully connive at crimes which their own laws pronounce worthy of capital punishment, the smiles of heaven must be expected on other grounds, and obtained, if obtained at all, for the sake of men diametrically opposite in principle and practice.—W.

before. The world vanishes out of my sight! Heavenly and eternal things appear much more real and important than ever before. I feel myself to be under much greater obligations to be the Lord's than before this sore affliction. The way of salvation by faith in Jesus Christ has appeared more clear and excellent; and I have been constrained to venture my all upon him; and have found great peace of soul, in what I hope have been actings of faith. Some parts of the Psalms have been very comforting and refreshing to my soul. I hope God has helped me to eye his hand in this awful dispensation; and to see the infinite right he has to his own, and to dispose of them as he pleases.

“Thus, dear madam, I have given you some broken hints of the exercises and supports of my mind, since the death of him, whose memory and example will ever be precious to me as my own life.—O dear madam! I doubt not but I have your, and my honoured father's prayers daily for me; but give me leave to intreat you both to

request earnestly of the Lord that I may never despise his chastenings, nor faint under this his severe stroke; which I am sensible there is great danger of, if God should only deny me the supports that he has hitherto graciously granted.

“O, I am afraid I shall conduct myself so as to bring dishonour on my God, and the religion which I profess! No, rather let me die this moment, than be left to bring dishonour on God's holy name.—I am overcome—I must conclude with once more begging, that as my dear parents remember themselves, they would not forget their greatly afflicted daughter (now a lonely widow) nor her fatherless children. My duty to my ever dear and honoured parents, love to my brothers and sisters. From, I dear, madam, your dutiful and affectionate daughter,

“ESTHER BURR.”

The following letter, addressed to her father, was written soon after; it is dated Princeton, November 2d, 1757:

“Honoured sir, your most affectionate, comforting letter by my brother ———

was exceedingly refreshing to me, although I was something damped by hearing that I should not see you until spring.* But it is my comfort in this disappointment, as well as under all my afflictions, that God knows what is best for me, and for his own glory. Perhaps I doted too much on the company and conversation of such a near and dear affectionate father and guide. I cannot doubt but all is for the best, and I am satisfied that God should order the affair of your removal as shall be for his glory, whatever comes of me.

“ Since I wrote my mother’s letter, God has carried me through new trials, and given me new supports. My little son has been sick with a slow fever, ever since my brother left us, and has been brought to the brink of the grave, but I hope in mercy God is bringing him up again. I was enabled to resign the child (after a severe struggle with nature) with the greatest

* When Mr. Edwards wrote the letter she refers to, he did not think of going to Princeton till spring; but he afterwards determined otherwise, and went in January, as before stated.

freedom. God shewed me that the child was not my own, but his; and that he had a right to recall what he had lent, whenever he thought fit; and I had no reason to complain, or say God was hard with me. This silenced me.

“ But O, how good is God! He not only kept me from complaining, but comforted, by enabling me to offer up the child by faith, if ever I acted faith. I saw the fulness there was in Christ for little infants, and his willingness to accept of such as were offered to him. *Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not*, were comforting words. God also shewed me in such a lively manner, the fulness there is in himself of all spiritual blessings, that I said, Although all streams were cut off, yet so long as my God lives, I have enough. He enabled me to say, *Although thou slay me, yet will I trust in thee.*

“ In this time of trial, I was led to enter into a renewed and explicit covenant with God, in a more solemn manner than ever

before; and with the greatest freedom and delight. After much self-examination and prayer, I gave up myself and children to God, with my whole heart. Never until now, had I a sense of the privilege we are allowed in covenanting with God!. This act of soul left my mind in a quiet and steady trust in God.

“A few days after this, one evening, in talking of the glorious state my dear departed husband must be in, my soul was carried out in such longing desires after this glorious state, that I was forced to retire from the family to conceal my joy. When alone, I was so transported, and my soul carried out in such eager desires after perfection, and the full enjoyment of God, and to serve him uninterruptedly, that I think my nature would not have borne much more. I think, dear sir, I had, that night, a foretaste of heaven. This frame continued in some good degree the whole night. I slept but little, and when I did, my dreams were all of heavenly and divine things. Frequently since, I have felt the

same in kind, though not in degree. Thus a kind and gracious God has been with me in six troubles, and in seven.

“ But O, Sir, what cause of deep humiliation and abasement of soul have I, on account of remaining corruption; which I see working continually, especially pride! O how many shapes does pride cloke itself in! Satan is also busy shooting his darts; but, blessed be God, those temptations of his, that used to overthrow me, as yet have not touched me! O, to be delivered from the power of Satan, as well as from sin! I cannot help hoping that the time is near. God is certainly fitting me for himself; and when I think it will be soon that I shall be called hence, the thought is transporting.”

APPENDIX III.

*A Sketch of the Life and Character of the Rev.
Jonathan Edwards, D. D.*

JONATHAN EDWARDS, junior, D. D. President of Union College in Schenectady, was the second son of his parents, and was born at Northampton, May 26, 1745. In his early childhood he appeared a boy of great expectation; but, however promising his capacity, and however ambitious he might be of excelling at that age, when the mind begins to unfold itself, this period of his life was attended with a number of singularly embarrassing circumstances, the tendency of which was to repress his exertion, and to discourage his mind. He was afflicted with an inflammatory weakness in his eyes, which almost entirely prevented his learning to read, until a much later period than is common. This weakness

resisted many and long continued medical applications. At length, by the shaving of his head, often repeated, and for long continuance, the inflammation in some degree abated; so that he was able to apply, in a moderate degree, to the rudiments of learning, and to revive in his anxious parents the hope, that he would not be entirely lost even to the literary world. It was during his childhood also, that the unhappy contest at Northampton rose to its height, between his father and the church there, which terminated in a final separation; whereby the assiduous attention of his affectionate parents was necessarily much diverted from him.

When Mr. Edwards and his family removed from Northampton to Stockbridge, his son was but six years old. In addition to the discouragements already mentioned, new and considerable difficulties attended him while at Stockbridge. There was no school in the settlement, but one which was common to the Indian children and the white people; and there were so few of the latter, either in the school or the town,

that he was in danger of forgetting entirely the English tongue. However, whilst at school here, he learned the language of the Mohekanseew, or Stockbridge Indians, so perfectly, that the natives frequently observed "that he spoke exactly like an Indian." This language he retained, in a good degree, through life; and the American public is in possession of some interesting remarks upon it, communicated by him to the Connecticut Society of Arts and Sciences, and published at their request.

His father had a strong desire, in subserviency to the openings of providence, and growing signs of gracious qualifications in this beloved child, that he might become a missionary among the Aborigines. A noble wish, worthy of so great a mind, and so benevolent a heart! Accordingly, in October, 1755, when he was but ten years of age, he was sent with the Rev. Gideon Hawley (since of Mashpee, on Cape Cod) to Oughquauga, on the Susquehannah river, in order to learn the language of the Oneida Indians. Oughquauga was in a wilderness, at the distance of about one hundred miles

from any English settlement. At this place he continued but four months, by reason of the war which broke out between England and France, and extended itself into their colonies. Whilst he was with these Indians, he made rapid progress in acquiring their language, and in engaging their affections. They were so much pleased with his attainments, and his amiable disposition, that, when they thought their settlement exposed to inroads from the French, they took him upon their shoulders, and carried him many miles, through the wilderness, to a place which they deemed secure. After this, however, he never returned to them any more.

His father died in 1758; but it was not till the month of February, 1760, when he had almost completed his fifteenth year, that he seriously commenced the study of the Latin language, at a grammar school in Princeton, in New Jersey, the town where his father died. And such progress did he make in learning, that in September, 1761, he was admitted a member of the college in the same town, over which his father had

presided for a short time before his death. In September, 1765, he received the degree of Bachelor of Arts.

While he was at college, at a time of general religious awakening in Princeton, he obtained a hope of his reconciliation to God, through Jesus Christ. This was during the presidency, and under the impressive preaching of the late Dr. Finley. The following dedication of himself to the service of God, which was made by him at that time, was found among his papers after his decease.

Nassau-Hall, Sept. 17, 1763.

“ I Jonathan Edwards, student of the College in New Jersey, on this 17th day of September, 1763, being the day before the first time I proposed to draw near the Lord's table, after much thought and consideration, as well as prayer to Almighty God for his assistance, resolved by the grace of God to enter into an express act of self-dedication to the service of God; as being a thing highly reasonable in its own nature, and that might be of eminent service to

keep me steady in my christian course; to rouse me out of sloth and indolence, and uphold me in the day of temptation.

“Eternal and ever blessed God! I desire, with the deepest humiliation and abasement of soul, to come in the name and for the sake of Jesus Christ, and present myself before thee, sensible of my infinite unworthiness to appear before thee, especially on such an occasion as this, to enter into a covenant with thee. But notwithstanding my sins have made such a separation between thee and my soul, I beseech thee; through Christ thy Son, to vouchsafe thy presence with me, and acceptance of the best sacrifice which I can make.

“I do, O Lord, in hopes of thy assisting grace, solemnly make an entire and perpetual surrender of all that I am and have unto thee, being determined in thy strength to renounce all former Lords who have had dominion over me, every lust of the eye, of the flesh, and of the mind, and to live entirely devoted to thee and thy service. To thee do I consecrate the powers of my mind, with whatever improvements thou

hast already, or shalt be pleased hereafter to grant me, in the literary way ; purposing, if it be thy good pleasure, to pursue my studies assiduously, that I may be better prepared to act in any sphere of life in which thou shalt place me. I do solemnly dedicate all my possessions, my time, my influence over others, to be all used for thy glory.

“ To thy direction I resign myself, and all that I have, trusting all future contingencies in thy hands, and may thy will in all things, and not mine, be done. Use me, O Lord, as an instrument of thy service ! I beseech thee, number me among thy people ! May I be clothed with the righteousness of thy Son ; ever impart to me, through him, all needful supplies of thy purifying and cheering spirit ! I beseech thee, O Lord, that thou wouldest enable me to live according to this my vow, constantly avoiding all sin ; and when I shall come to die, in that solemn and awful hour, may I remember this my covenant ; and do thou, O Lord, remember it, too, and give my departing spirit an abundant admittance

into the realms of bliss! And if, when I am laid in the dust; any surviving friend should meet with this memorial, may it be a means of good to him, and do thou admit him to partake of the blessings of thy covenant of grace, through Jesus the great Mediator; to whom with thee, O Father, and thy Holy Spirit, be everlasting praises ascribed, by saints and angels! Amen.”

When he had finished the usual course of studies at College, he entered more particularly upon the study of divinity, the favourite study of his life, under the instruction of the late Rev. Jos. Bellamy, D. D. at Bethlehem, in Connecticut. In October, 1766, he was licensed to preach the gospel, by the association of the county of Litchfield; and in 1767, he was appointed a tutor in the College at Princeton, where he continued two years. But where he spent the intervening time, about eleven months, between his being licensed to preach, and his undertaking the tuition at Princeton, it is not easy to ascertain; it is supposed that he was at some country place as a candidate for the ministry.

During his residence at Princeton, he was invited to preach to the society of White-Haven, in the town of New-Haven; in Connecticut. On mutual approbation, he was ordained to the pastoral charge of that church, Jan. 5, 1769; and continued there until May, 1795; when he was dismissed by an ecclesiastical council, at the mutual request of the pastor and the society, after a residence among them of about six and twenty years. For several years previous to his dismissal, some uneasiness had subsisted in the society, arising from a difference of religious opinions. Those peculiar sentiments, whence the uneasiness originated, and which were adopted by some of the leading and most influential men among his parishioners, were of a nature quite opposite to the sentiments of Dr. Edwards; and, indeed, to those of the same church and society, at the time when he was ordained among them. This diversity of opinion may be justly considered as the *principal* cause of the separation between Dr. Edwards and his people; though others of inferior moment had their influence.

ence. But the *ostensible* cause assigned by the society, was their inability to support a minister.

Dr. Edwards did not continue long in this unsettled state; for in January, 1796, he was installed pastor of the church in Colebrook, Litchfield county, Connecticut. Here he continued administering the word and ordinances to a very affectionate people for above three years. In this town he intended to have spent the remainder of his days, had it been the pleasure of his divine Master. It was much his wish to pursue his favourite study of theology, in a less confined manner. To this the retired situation of Colebrook greatly contributed; and a change of audience would render the weekly preparations for the sabbath somewhat less laborious. So favourable an opportunity of pursuing his studies was not neglected; but his continuance in this desirable retreat was not of long duration.

In the summer of 1799, he was elected President of a College, in the town of Schenectady, in the state of New-York, which had lately been instituted and en-

dowed. The election thus made was immediately communicated to him, with an invitation to remove, as soon as he conveniently could. In consequence of this invitation he was again dismissed, by an ecclesiastical council, from his pastoral office, in the month of June; and in the July following he removed to Schenectady. From this time his talents and attention were appropriated, with uninterrupted assiduity, to the concerns of this newly instituted seminary.

In this situation he continued only two years; for about the middle of July, 1801, his labours were suspended by a regular intermitting fever, unattended with any immediately alarming symptoms. But about eight days before his decease, nervous symptoms shewed themselves, and indicated his approaching dissolution. The progress of the disease, from this date, was very rapid, and he experienced its impairing effects so much, that within three days he was almost entirely deprived of his speech, of the regular exercise of his limbs, and at intervals, of his reason. Thus he continued

regularly to decline until August 1, 1801, when he expired. By the effects of his disorder, he was unavoidably prevented from expressing his views and feelings on the approach of eternity for the last five days of his life. In the early stages of his illness, however, he expressed his entire and willing resignation to the pleasure of God, and that he satisfactorily acquiesced in the gospel way of salvation through a divine Redeemer.*

* Some further circumstances preceding his death may be here mentioned. On the Saturday before he was taken ill, he rode from Schenectady to Troy, to preach for Mr. Coe, the minister of that town. Troy is situated on the eastern bank of the Hudson, seven miles above Albany, fifteen from Schenectady, and about a hundred and seventy from New York. The sabbath immediately succeeding was intensely hot. He rode to church in the morning in his chaise with Mrs. Edwards. When he returned at noon, he gave his seat in the chaise to a lady, and walked to the house where he lodged, which was at a considerable distance from the church. In the afternoon he walked to the church, for the same reason, and, after the usual public service was ended, he performed a funeral service. By the heat, and the fatigue which he underwent, he appears to have been materially affected. The following Tuesday he was seized with an intermitting fever, which, in somewhat less than three weeks, terminated his life.

The year after Dr. Edwards was ordained to the charge of the White-Haven society in New-Haven, he married Miss Mary

He was attended by several physicians, but he freely declared to them, that their medicines did not seem to reach the cause of his disease. Early in the progress of his illness he seems to have had a presentiment that it would terminate fatally. How far the uncommonly striking similarity, or coincidence, between the circumstances of his life and those of his father contributed to this, it is not easy to say; but it was observed, that he mentioned several of them with a degree of feeling more than common.

The reader, will, perhaps, be gratified, if we take a review of these coincidences:—They were both the sons of clergymen, and of clergymen's daughters—they bore the same name—were alike liberally educated and distinguished scholars—they were not only both preachers of the gospel, but also preached the same doctrines, in the same strain, and with considerable success—they were both tutors in the seminaries where they were educated, and for the same continuance—they were afterwards settled in congregations where their maternal grandfathers respectively, were settled before them—they continued in those congregations nearly the same length of time—they were dismissed by their churches, and ecclesiastical councils, on account of their religious opinions—they were again settled over obscure congregations in the interior of the country—they were both drawn out from those retired situations to the presidency of a college, and alike reluctant to obey the summons—after a short period spent in the duties of their new office they died—and very near the same age. To this we may add, that they were con-

Porter, daughter of the Hon. Eleazer and Mrs. Sarah Porter, of Hadley, in Massachusetts. By her he had four children, three of whom survived him; a son and two daughters. Their oldest daughter married Mr. Hoit, a respectable merchant in Schenectady. Their youngest daughter was married to the Rev. Mr. Chapin, a gentleman of respectability settled in Stepney, the south parish of Wethersfield, seven miles below the city of Hartford. Their son, Jonathan Walter Edwards, esq. was educated in Yale College, regarded as an excellent scholar, and afterwards a tutor in it. After this he became a counsellor at law in the city of Hartford; and, to use the words of a respectable American gentleman of whom enquiry was made, "is, perhaps, not exceeded, in abilities or reputation, by any practitioner of the same standing. The vigour of mind for which his father and grandfather were distinguished, seems to

siderably alike in person—and remarkably so in mind—their endowments and attainments, both intellectual and moral, were apparently almost the same—they were alike distinguished for religious excellence, strength of mind, acute discernment, and close investigation.—W.

M

have descended in a very liberal measure to him." Both the daughters, it is apprehended, are members of christian churches; and the son appears an uniform and strenuous advocate for the cause of christianity, and a constant and serious attendant on the worship of God. "They are all in easy circumstances, and have ever sustained an unblemished and respectable character."

Mrs. Edwards, the mother of the persons now mentioned, an excellent lady, was drowned in June, 1782. The circumstances of this affecting event were these: Dr. and Mrs. Edwards were taking an airing in their chaise, in the north-eastern part of New-Haven; when at some distance from home, the Doctor was called away to attend to some necessary business. As Mrs. Edwards was returning, she suffered the horse to drink at a watering place, in a small river, with the depth of which she was wholly unacquainted. The horse suddenly plunged and fell, and threw her from the chaise into the river, where she was drowned.

Dr. Edwards was married a second time;

the object of his choice in this connection was Miss Mercy Sabin, of New-Haven, whom he left to deplore his loss.—As a husband and parent he was kind, faithful, and affectionate. As a brother, he merited and possessed the respect, esteem, and affection of all his brothers and sisters. When a child, he was not only singularly dutiful to his parents, but also affectionate and conscientious; a disposition of mind which manifested itself through his whole life. By nature, however, he was of an ardent, irritable disposition, of which he appears to have been early conscious. Whilst he was quite young he formed a resolution, that he would uniformly, and with unabating watchfulness, withstand this propensity, until it should be subdued. This he entered upon, as upon an important business for life—as an achievement which *must* be accomplished, however difficult and arduous the task might prove. And such a blessing attended his diligent and indefatigable vigilance, as enabled him to possess an unusual command over his passions, and to pass through a life attended with many

trying circumstances, with the reputation of uncommon equanimity. He knew what it was to be abased, and also what it was to abound; but in prosperity and adversity he appeared the same. His fortitude under trials was great; a fortitude founded in a constant reliance on providence, and in resignation to the will of God; a temper of mind as different as possible from the frigid apathy of a Stoic.

About the time that he first made an explicit dedication of himself to the service of God, by a written covenant, when he was little more than eighteen years of age, he began a diary of his religious life. This he continued a few months, and then relinquished it; for a reason, no doubt, which he deliberately weighed, as it does not appear that he resumed it afterwards. This, however, is no uncommon thing; christians while young have more need of such helps, than when they have made greater progress; as young students need common-place books. Besides, when persons are engaged in public situations they are often obliged to abridge, at least, their

time of *writing*, concerning themselves. From what he has written by way of diary, he appears early to have determined to strive against sin and temptation, and to live in a manner becoming his holy professions, and to devote himself wholly to the service of God. The blessing with which it pleased God to accompany these pious exertions, was visible throughout the remainder of his life.

As a man of learning and strength of mind, "he probably had not a superior in the United States, and but few in the world." His logical powers were pre-eminent, and little if at all inferior to those of his father. Being generally favoured with good health, he improved this and his other valuable talents for the defence, the support, and the advancement of that religion which he professed, and of the cause in which he was engaged. In his own country, at least, his name will be long remembered with respect and honour; and is already placed, in the department of divinity, beneath very few, probably none, except that of his father. A more industrious man,

in whatever he undertook, and a character less soiled with human imperfection, is not easily found. His answer to Dr. Chauncey, his reply to Dr. West, and his sermons on the atonement of Christ, are in America extensively regarded as standard works; and will, most probably, never be answered.

Considered as a preacher, in his manner of delivery he was bold and animated; but he addressed the understanding and conscience, rather than the passions of his audience. All who had the pleasure to hear him will acknowledge with readiness, that, in his own mode, he was rarely, if ever, exceeded. His reasonings were strong and conclusive; and, in his writings especially, as might be expected from such a mind, he closely confined himself to his subject; always presenting something new, original, and instructive.

His constitution and health admitting it, he generally rose early, and immediately began his regular, diurnal *routine* of duty and business, which he observed through life with great uniformity; and from which

he was not easily diverted. He considered his immediate duty to his Creator as requiring his first obedience and attention; and then the relative and social duties of life were not neglected. His exercises, studies, and all his other concerns, as far as was consistent with his parochial duties, were conducted with regularity, upon a well formed system; whereby each duty was attended to in its proper season.

He possessed and merited the respect and affection of an extensive literary and ministerial acquaintance. The latter looked to him, under God, as to one of the firmest pillars, and ablest defenders of the genuine interests of the church, in a day of declension and infidelity; and in his death, the cause both of science and religion has sustained a loss not easily repaired. A correspondent of his observes: "I never knew Dr. Edwards's equal for impartial enquiry after truth; he always seemed thankful for any thing that could be urged against any peculiar sentiment of his own. His modesty and humility were very remarkable." Ano-

ther very respectable gentleman in America, in a letter to the writer of this Appendix, says: " Dr. Edwards I once numbered among the most valuable of my friends; and I lamented his death with much grief, not only on account of my own loss, but of that of the whole American—perhaps I might say—christian church. His piety was eminent, his learning extensive, and his penetration acute beyond those of any other man whom I have ever personally known, Dr. W——n alone excepted."

Dr. Edwards died possessed of an independent estate, as that subject is estimated in America. Mrs. Edwards also, the widow, had considerable property of her own, whereby she was placed in easy circumstances. This favourable distinction in the order of Providence, contributed much to relieve his mind of solicitude, both when coping with difficulties among his flock, and in the prospect of being removed from his family by death.

His literary productions are small, compared with those of his father, we mean in

bulk, though rather numerous.—Their general titles we shall subjoin below.* Dr.

* *A Catalogue of Dr. Edwards's Publications.*

1. The Salvation of all Men strictly examined, &c. in answer to Dr. Chauncey.
2. A Dissertation on Liberty and Necessity.
3. Observations on the Language of the Mohekaneew, or Stockbridge Indians, communicated to the Society of Arts and Sciences, and published at the request of the Society.
4. Brief Observations on the Doctrine of Universal Salvation.
5. Three Sermons on the Atonement.
6. A variety of occasional Sermons, separately published:
viz.
 - A. D. 1783. The faithful Manifestation of the Truth, the proper and immediate end of preaching the Gospel. A Sermon preached at Greenfield, at the Ordination of the Rev. Tim. Dwight.
 - 1791. The Injustice and Impolicy of the Slave Trade, &c. A Sermon before the Connecticut Society for the Promotion of Freedom, &c.
 - 1792. All Divine Truth profitable. A Sermon preached at Hamden, at the Ordination of the Rev. Dan. Bradley.
 - 1792. Faith and a good Conscience illustrated. A Sermon at the Ordination of the Rev. W. Brown, pastor of the first Church in Glastonbury.
 - 1792. The Marriage of a Wife's Sister considered in the Anniversary *Concio ad Clerum*, in the Chapel of Yale College.

Edwards inserted many excellent pieces in the New York Theological Magazine, signed I. or O. It is not supposed that he has left many manuscripts; but he proposed, long before his death, to write two works, the failure of which (for it is to be feared they have failed) is exceedingly to be regretted. They were intended to be exami-

A. D. 1793. (It is supposed) a Funeral Sermon for Mr. Senator Sherman.

1794. The Necessity of the Belief of Christianity by the Citizens of the State, in order to our political prosperity. A Sermon preached before his excellency Samuel Huntington, Esq. LL. D. Governor, and the General Assembly of the State of Connecticut, convened at Hartford.

1795. The Duty of the Ministers of the Gospel to preach the Truth. A Sermon at the Ordination of the Rev. Edward Dorr Griffin, A. M. to the pastoral charge of the church in New Hartford.

1797. A future State of Existence, and the Immortality of the Soul, illustrated from the Light of Scripture and Reason. Printed in a Volume of Sermons on important Subjects, collected from a Number of Ministers in some of the Northern States of America.

1799. A Farewell Sermon to the People of Colebrook.

nations of the doctrines of *Socinians* and of *Infidels*. It is with pleasure we remark, however, as connected with this failure, that those who would have been gratified with such productions by Dr. Edwards, will be not a little pleased with two works of similar design, published in our own country, by the Rev. Andrew Fuller, viz. "The Calvinistic and Socinian Systems compared as to their Moral Tendency;" and "The Gospel its own Witness." An American writer in the Connecticut Evangelical Magazine, to whom we are indebted for the greater part of the facts contained in this memoir, concludes with this observation: "Such was this great and good man, both in life and death. In the language of Shakespeare, we may with propriety say,

" ———— Take him for all in all,

We (scarce) shall look upon his like again."

As we are confident that many will be gratified by being presented with some extracts from Dr. Edwards's letters, on account of their being answers to enquiries proposed to him, respecting his relatives, &c.;

we conclude these memoirs with a few of them; for which we apprehend no apology is needful to those persons now living who are referred to, as there is nothing in them but what is honourable to all parties where names are mentioned.

New-Haven, March 16, 1787.

“ Of my father’s children *seven* are still living, *three* sons and *four* daughters. One of my sisters died last fall, the mother of *nine* children; hopefully a pious woman, exceedingly beloved by all her acquaintance. Of my two brothers, one, older than myself, lives at Stockbridge, where my father was settled after his removal from Northampton. Perhaps it will afford you pleasure to be informed, that he has the character of a pious as well as able man, and has obtained the confidence of his country to be elected a Member of Congress, and to be otherwise promoted in the civil line. The other brother, younger than myself, is settled in the practice of the law in this city. My father was succeeded at Northampton by one Mr. Hooker, who

died about the beginning of the late war. Now, one Mr. Williams is settled there."

New-Haven, Oct. 2, 1787.

"As you mention my 'former affliction,' I suppose you have heard, though I know not how, of my peculiar trial, in the loss of a most amiable consort. She was accidentally drowned. A most surprising and afflicting scene!—I have three children; one son only, my eldest now in his sixteenth year. He is prosecuting his studies at the college: a lad of decent behaviour; O that he may know God and Jesus Christ! As you too are a parent, you know how ardently a parent, who has any sense of divine things, wishes that his children may *walk in the truth*. Dear Sir, as you are so kind as to remember me in your prayers, for which I sincerely thank you, and hope God may hear and answer, will you add to your kindness by praying sometimes for my poor children, by nature children of wrath."

New-Haven, June 14, 1788.

"I do not know who the person was

with whom Mr. Brainerd had the conversation on the nature of faith, July 20, 1747; but probably it was one Mr. Croswell, a minister in Boston, who formerly published some pieces to prove, that the essence of faith consists in believing that Christ died for me in particular."

New-Haven, Dec. 24, 1788.

"The Trinitarian Controversy is likely to be agitated among us. A principal member of the church to which I am pastor, and who formerly appeared to be a friend to the true system, seems now to be warping off from that system in general, and from the doctrine of the Trinity in particular. I fear it will break the church. I beg your prayers, that I may act with wisdom, and with fidelity to the truth."

New-Haven, March 30, 1789.

"In answer to your enquiry, in a former letter, concerning Phoebe Bartlett,* I have to inform you that she is yet living, and has

* The child of four years old mentioned in Mr. Edwards's printed Northampton Narrative.

uniformly maintained the character of a true convert.—I remember nothing of Mr. Brainerd, nor of my sister Jerusha.—Though I had, during my father's life, some convictions of sin and danger, yet I have no reason to believe I had any real religion, till some years after his death."

New-Haven, Oct. 21, 1790.

"I have taken notice of Mr. Fuller's very candid and judicious observations and enquiries. O that all ministers would enquire with the like attention and candour! In that case, how rapid and glorious would be the progress of the truth!—In relation to my own affairs, last spring the difficulties in our church concerning religious sentiments, were professedly settled, and a written engagement subscribed, to bury all former uneasiness. But of late, difficulties have sprung up anew, and appear to be of such magnitude, that I have no expectation of continuing in connection with this church. The prospect of a removal is no way terrifying to me; but it is grievous to see those who have professed to be the

warmest friends of the true doctrines of the gospel, become the most bitter opposers. Also the prospect that the preaching of the true gospel will be eradicated from a large town, and error and false gospel introduced in its stead, is truly grievous. But the Lord reigns, and will take care of his own cause."

New-Haven, Oct. 21, 1791.

"The person who was referred to in the *Thoughts on the Revival* was the author's wife. [Nature of the work in a particular instance, &c.]—The difficulty in our church still subsists, sometimes in a greater, sometimes in a less degree. The paroxysm is generally in the winter, and if this approaching winter should remove me from my present situation, I would not have you be surprised. The current against the doctrines of grace has run exceedingly strong in this town for five years past."

New-Haven, Sept. 12, 1794.

"On the death of my good and able friend Mr. Senator Sherman, I expected

my troubles here would break out with greater fury than ever. But God's ways are not as our ways, nor are his thoughts our thoughts. Ever since his death we have been more quiet than before. Yet it seemed that he, while alive, was the great means of keeping us so quiet as we then were."

New-Haven, April 14, 1795.

"As I have formerly troubled you with some account of my own difficulties, I cannot but now inform you of the present state of my affairs. My great and good friend Mr. Shermon, you know, is dead. Another of my best friends died sometime after Mr. Shermon. Another is laid by from usefulness, from age and infirmity. These dispensations of Providence have given a great advantage to those who have been inimical to me, on account of my sentiments and preaching. It is nine years since our difficulties began. This winter my opposers have exerted themselves with great vigour, and in the first place procured a vote of the congregation,

that, on account of their diminution in number and property, they were not able to support their minister. On my desiring an explanation of this vote, whether they meant to suggest that I had been the criminal cause of their diminution and poverty, they by vote declared that it was not their intention to suggest, that I have been the criminal cause; still, by another vote, they declared that it was their desire that the pastoral relation in which I stood to them, should be dissolved on the ground of their diminution and poverty. So that as soon as a council can be called, and the forms gone through, I shall be liberated from my connection with this people. So are we all liable to changes! But I do not wish you to indulge anxiety for me, as even my enemies pretend not to bring any impeachment against me. I conceive my character is fair with my brethren in the ministry, and with the public in general, and I hope I may be useful elsewhere. In one respect, Providence has provided better for me against this event than it did for my father. By my first marriage I became

possessed of some property, as well as obtained a most excellent wife. I have but three children. My son is settled in business; and one of my daughters is married. I mention these circumstances merely to relieve your friendly anxiety."

New-Haven, May 6, 1795.

"As I am about to be released from my connection with this congregation, it is altogether uncertain where my lot may be cast. But in general, I shall follow the ministry, wherever God shall give me opportunity to do it, with the prospect of usefulness and peace."

Greenwich, Nov. 1, 1795.

"I inclose for your information the result of our council. Though the only reason for my dismissal urged by the people was their poverty, the true reason was the disaffection of some principal men to the doctrines I preached. This was well known to the council, yet as they professed it not, no notice could be taken of it. Since my dismissal, Providence has constantly em-

ployed me in supplying vacant congregations. I have not been out of some vacancy a single Sabbath; and have had more applications than I could comply with. In this place, (Greenwich,) and at Colebrook in this state, (Connecticut,) I have received calls to settle; but have not as yet answered either of them. Probably I shall accept of one or the other. So that though my former people have rejected me, yet Providence and other churches seem disposed to employ me. O may I be employed to do good to the church of Christ.

“ I have not seen any thing in my father's MSS. concerning the best mode of teaching Indians. I remember that besides preaching on the Lord's day, he was wont to have an evening exercise, in the winter, at a private house, in which he gave them an account of sacred history, with practical reflections.—The Indians are now entirely gone from Stockbridge.”

Colebrook, June 7, 1796.

“ In my last letter I told you, that I had before me two calls: one to the charge of

the church in this town; the other to that of a church in Greenwich, both in the state of Connecticut. After some deliberation, I thought it my duty to accept of the call from Colebrook, an inland town in the north-eastern part of the state. In this retired situation, I am much more happy than in my former residence. I enjoy peace here, which I could not there, as I have formerly told you. The neighbouring ministers are all friendly here. I have here more leisure for study, and a rural life was always more agreeable to me than one in a populous town, having spent that part of my life at Stockbridge, in which we commonly form our taste in such things. O, that I may do some good in this my present situation! I request your prayers for me to this end."

Colebrook, April 30, 1798.

"Since I wrote last, I have been twice imminently exposed to death; in both instances by a fall from my horse. But a kind Providence preserved me. By one of the falls, my shoulder was injured, but is

now restored to wonted use. I beseech you to join me in sincere thanks to God my preserver; and O may I constantly maintain a sense of my constant liableness to the great change."

Schenectady, August 24, 1799.

"While we are in this world, we have no continuing city. It is not yet four years since I removed from New-Haven to Colebrook; and four weeks since, I arrived in this town with my family from Colebrook; in consequence of an invitation from the trustees of the College here, to take the presidency of it. My removal from Colebrook was a tender and affecting scene. The people professed to be exceedingly desirous of my continuing among them; yet consented, though with reluctance, to leave it to a council, according to our usual form, for advice. A committee of the principal men of the church and town appeared, and gave reasons why I should not be removed from them. Still, after mature deliberation, the council was unanimously of the opinion, that it was my duty to accept

the call from Schenectady, and their duty to consent. But what renders it most affecting was, that for about three months before the sitting of the council, it had pleased God to give more apparent success to my ministry than I had been favoured with in any part of my life. The attention of the greater part of the people was excited to religion, a goodly number hopefully made the subjects of divine grace, among whom were some of principal influence in the town; and a number of others were under deep convictions, enquiring what they should do to be saved. So that at my publicly taking leave of them, I was strongly affected myself, and it was said there was not a dry eye in the house. The people have requested a copy for the press. A very different parting this from that I had at New-Haven. Schenectady is a town half as large again as New-Haven, 17 miles N. W. from Albany, in the state of New York. The college here was incorporated in 1795, and as there is a large country to the northward and westward without any institution of the kind,

this college is expected to be an important seminary. I beg your prayers that I may be assisted to a wise and faithful discharge of my duty. My predecessor in office was Dr. John Blair Smith, who was previously minister in Philadelphia."

" P. S. *Sept.* 2, 1799.—Information is just received, that Dr. Smith died at Philadelphia on the 21st ult. of the yellow fever. This is particularly striking to me. You remember how soon my father died, after he arrived at the college in New Jersey. May we all stand with our loins girded."

" *Schenectady, Sept.* 1, 1800.

" For a month past I have been too unwell to write; I am now somewhat recovered, but not entirely. My disorder has been a fever. My former charge at Colebrook is supplied by a Mr. Lee, of whom we have good expectations. In my new situation I find much less time for theological studies; yet I hope I may be useful. It was indeed a tender scene to part with the dear people at Colebrook, in

the midst of a shower of divine grace on my poor labours; the greatest success that ever God was pleased to vouchsafe to my ministry. Yet how much more agreeable to part thus, than to part in contention. I send you a copy of the farewell sermon, of which in some respects I am ashamed; I mean of the mechanical part. I left the copy with the people; they, unacquainted with the business of printing, committed it to a printer; he, to make the most of the job, acted a penurious part in the execution; and, what is worse, has made the most blunders that ever I saw in so short a piece."

. " *Schenectady, Feb. 27, 1801.*

" As I had no raised expectations when I came to this place, I find things more agreeable than I expected. The principal men of the legislature of the state favour the college, and appear to have confidence in me, in my present situation. Since my arrival here, the legislature has granted to the college 10,000 dollars in money, and lands supposed to be worth 28,000 dollars. If I may partly believe the compliments of

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my friends, the college is growing in reputation. I hope I have been the instrument of some good here, not by promoting literature only, but by spreading the more thorough and accurate knowledge of the doctrines of grace. I undertook the service with great reluctance, on account of the labour and responsibility attached to it; but hitherto a kind Providence has favoured me. Though the institution is as yet young, if wise measures be pursued, and the smiles of Providence be continued, I doubt not it will be very useful. I request your prayers, that I may have wisdom and grace according to my day and situation. I rejoice to hear of the success of your missionaries in the East Indies. May they go on and prosper. There are several places in this northern part of the state of New York, in which it has lately pleased the Great Head of the church to shed down his influences to the conviction of many, and the hopeful conversion of a great number."

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